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ABSTRACT

Every child deserves to believe that she or he is truly a wonder. Together with the children's book, the Leader's Guide provides a complete course on self-esteem for young children. The Guide endorses three core beliefs: (1) All children are inherently valuable without regard to gender, race, religion, family background, economic status, appearance, abilities, health, possessions, or any other factor; (2) All children have the right to feel good about themselves exactly as they are; and (3) A child's value is unconditional. The children's book introduces several important concepts that strengthen and support self-esteem. The Leader's Guide shows how to teach and reinforce those concepts in a hands-on, experiential way. The activities make full use of children's natural curiosity and creativity. The Guide is divided into chapters that correspond to the children's book sections. Each chapter has four parts: (1) an opening statement about the concept being presented; (2) a series of goals that describe the main ideas; (3) activities to try with children; and (4) suggestions for follow-up that reinforce the concepts taught in the lesson. (RJM)

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Just Because I Am

A Child's Book of Affirmation

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By
Lauren Murphy Payne, M.S.W.
Illustrations by Claudia Rohling

CG0256679

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Minneapolis, Minnesota
Printed in Singapore

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To Aaron and Adam
For Karen and the lost children
LMP

To Paul and our children
Paul, Ben, and Jennifer
CR

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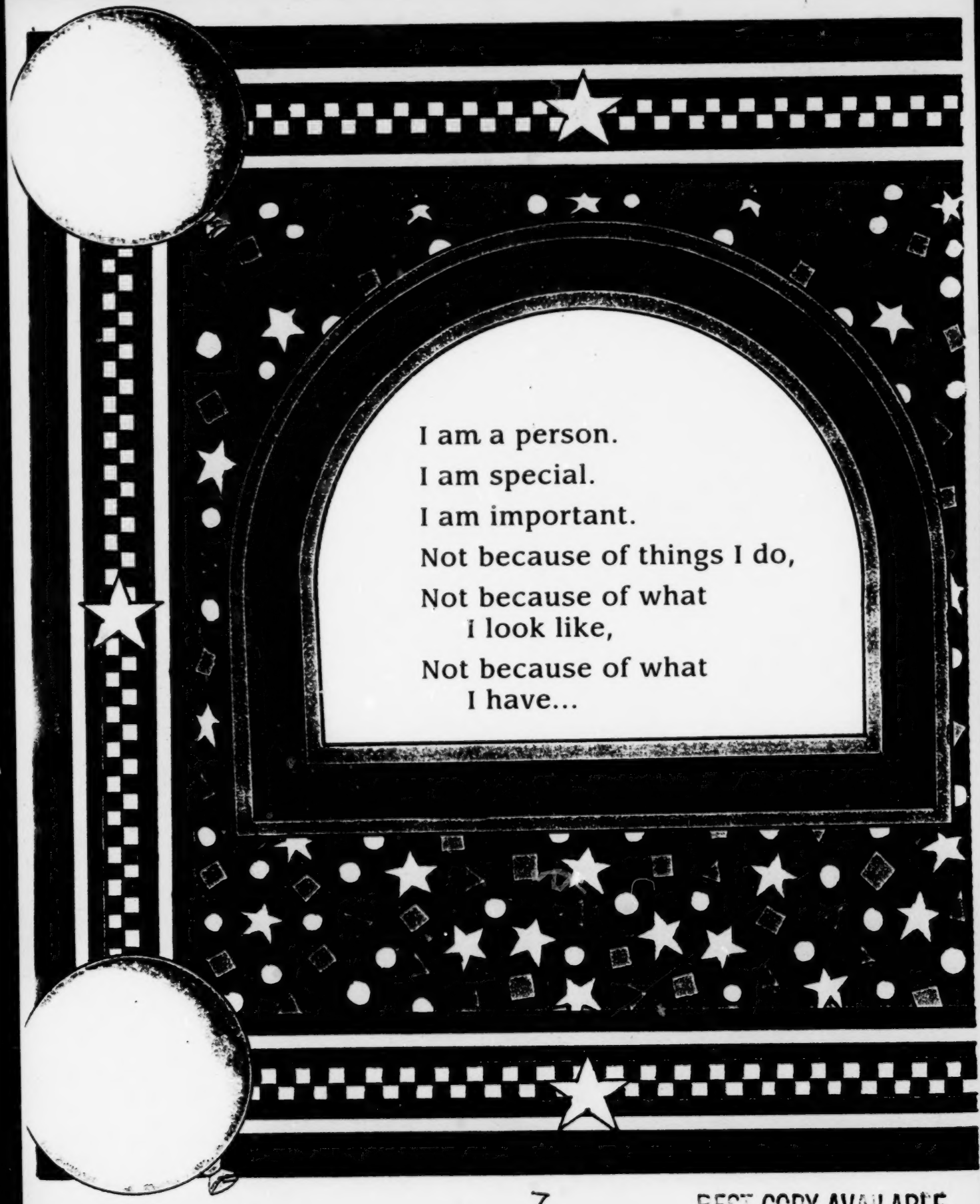

I am a person.
I am special.
I am important.
Not because of things I do,
Not because of what
I look like,
Not because of what
I have...

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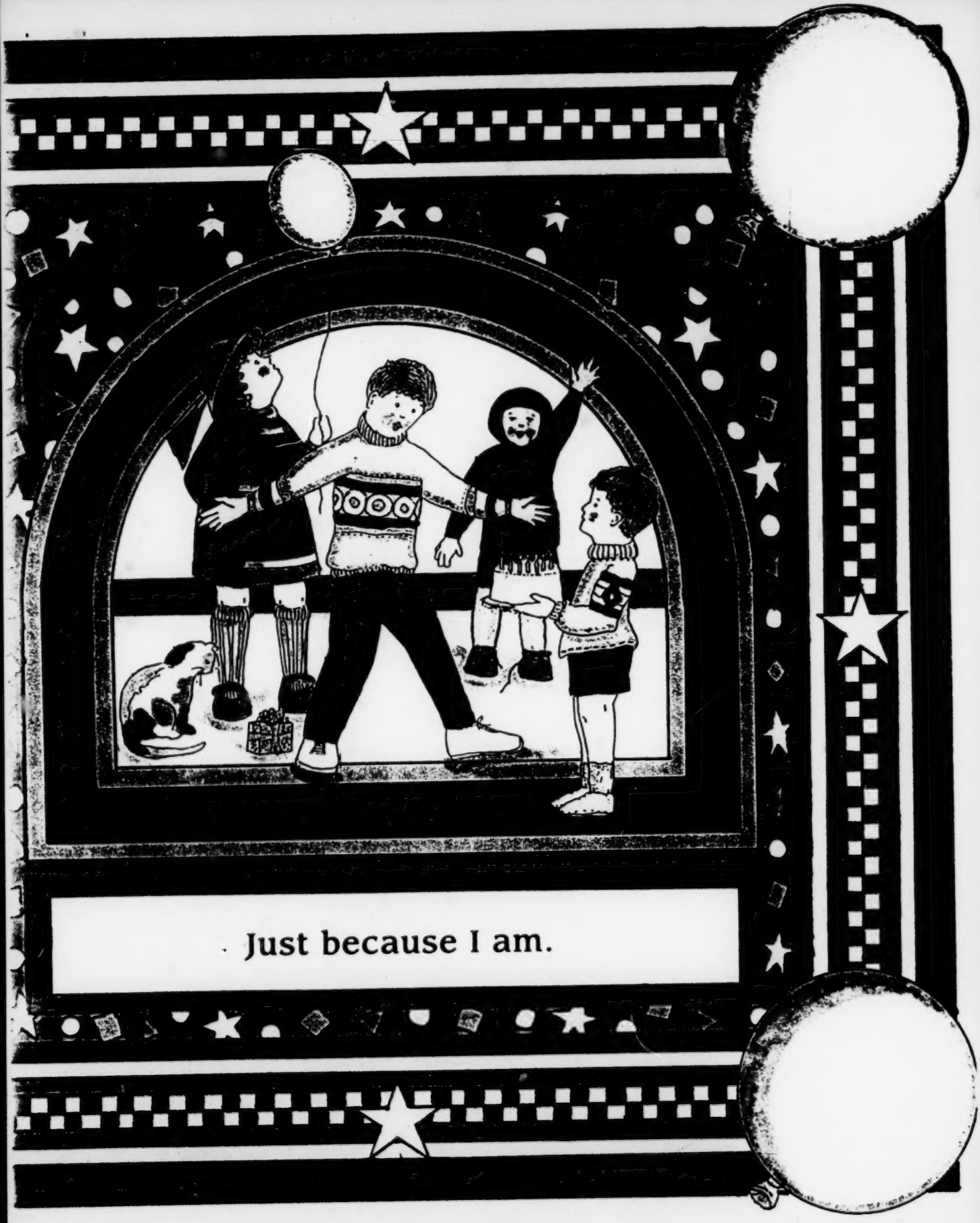
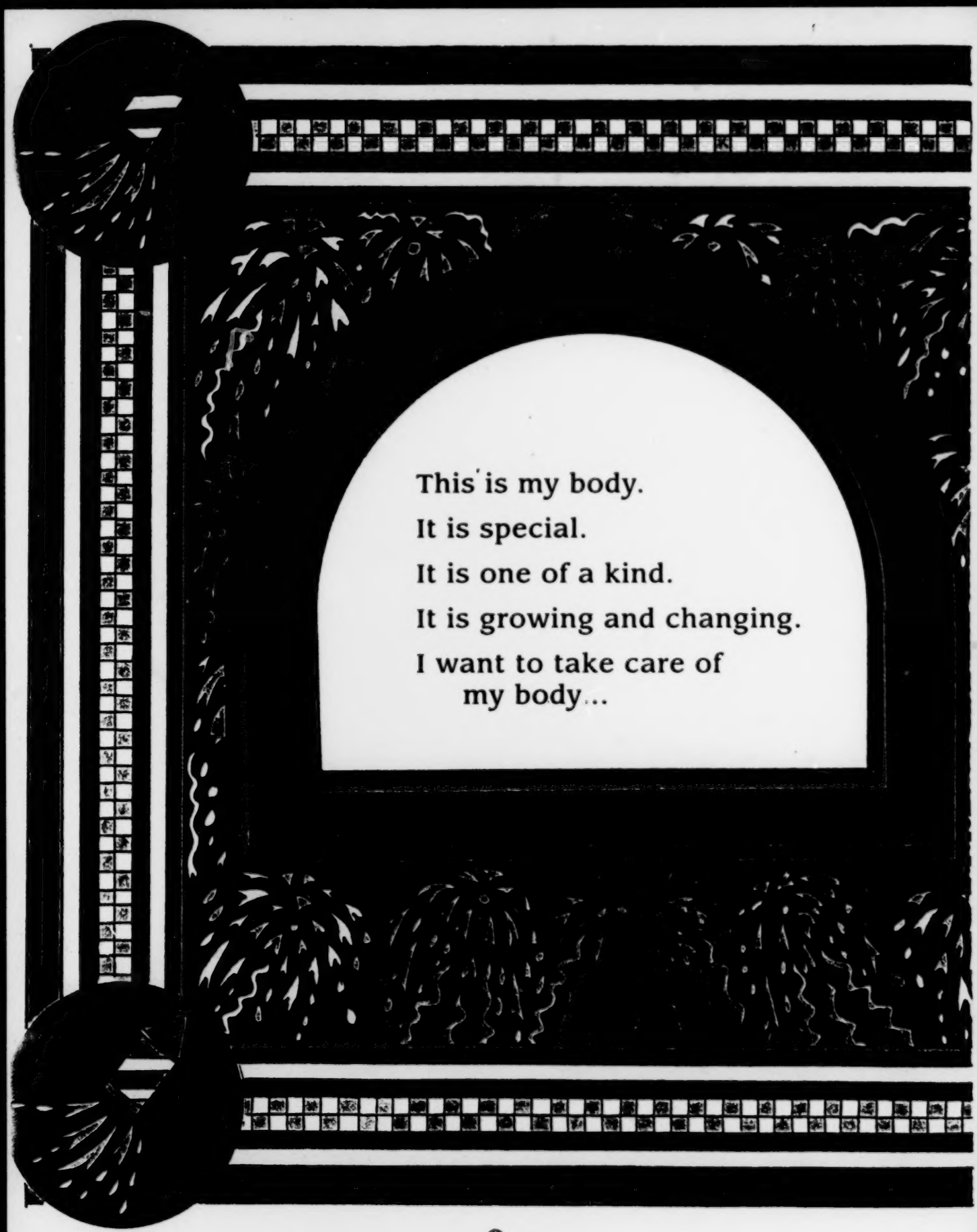


Just because I am.


This is my body.
It is special.
It is one of a kind.
It is growing and changing.
I want to take care of
my body...

Because it's mine.

My body talks to me.

It tells me when
I'm hungry.

It tells me when
I'm sleepy.

It tells me when I'm sick.

I can trust my body...

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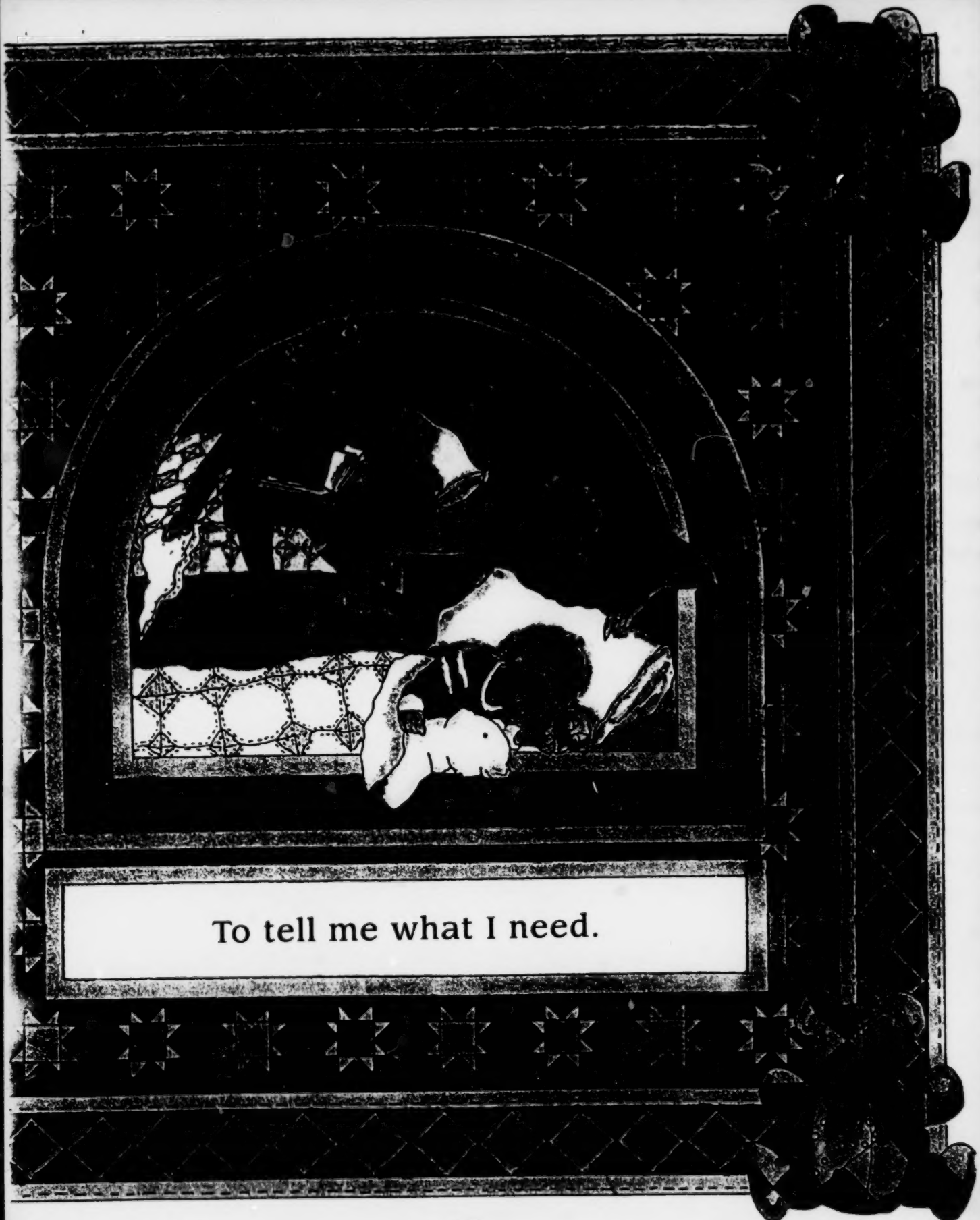


To tell me what I need.

Sometimes I have
strong feelings.

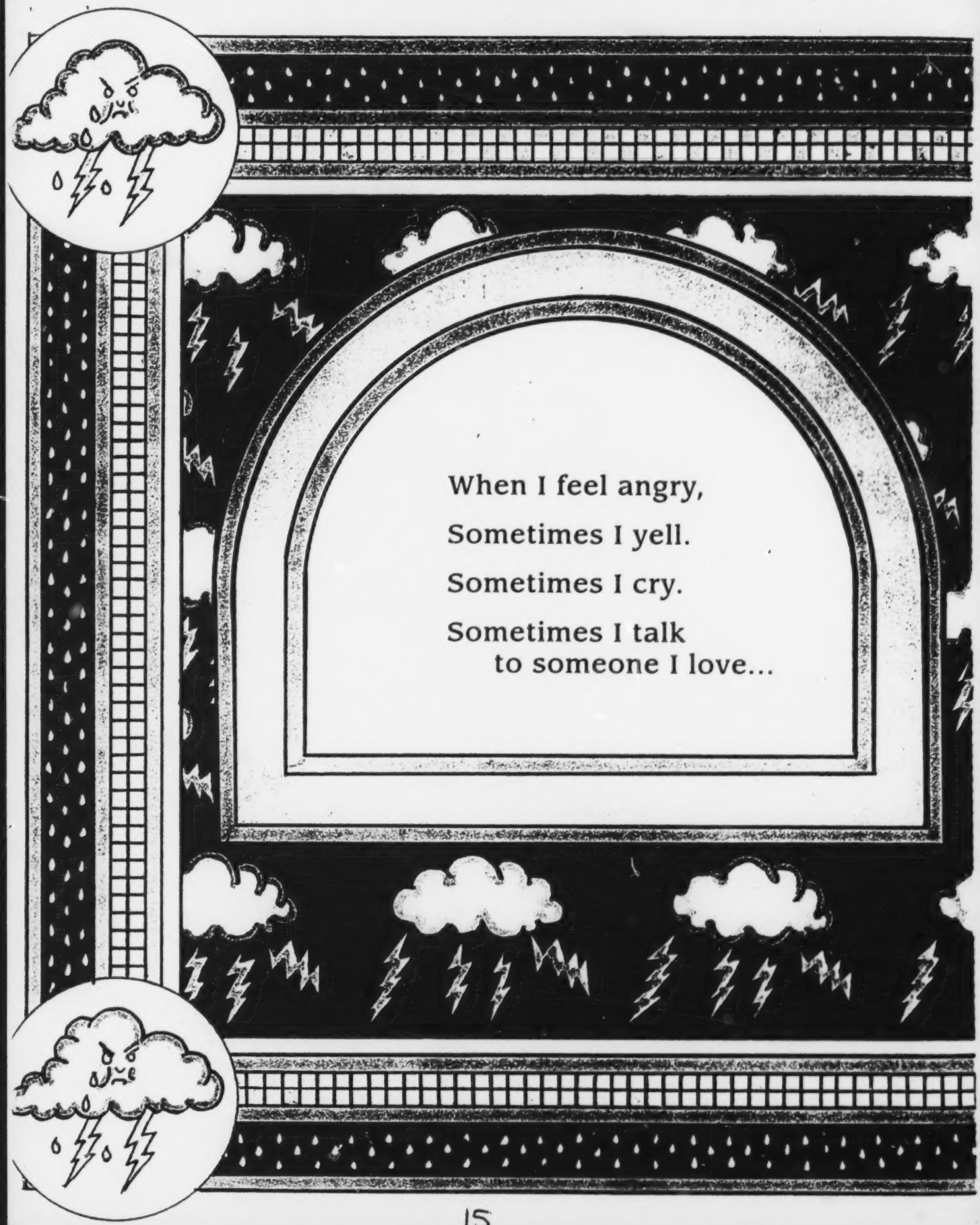
I feel anger.

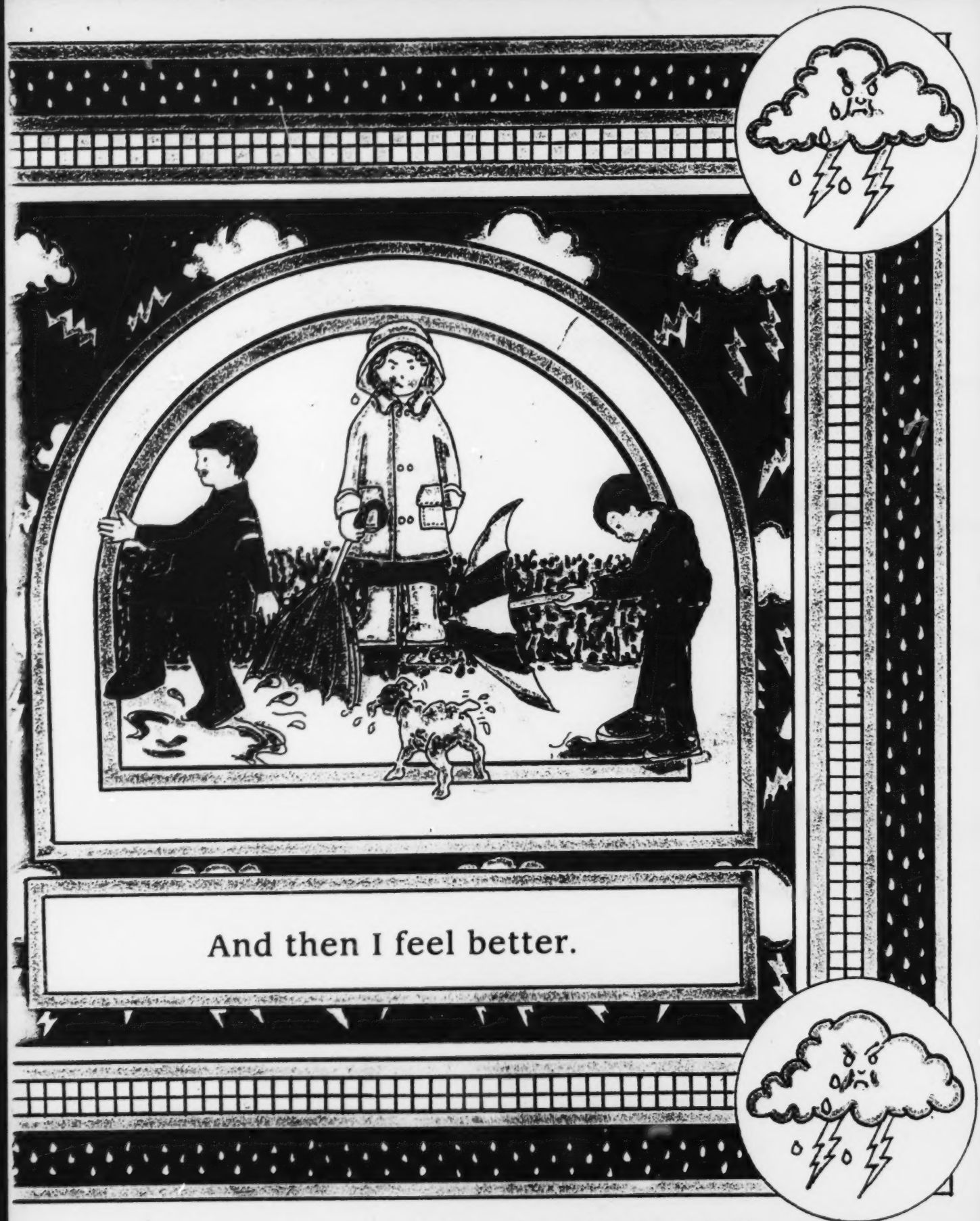
I feel sadness.

I feel fear.

I feel love...

These feelings belong to me.


When I feel angry,
Sometimes I yell.
Sometimes I cry.
Sometimes I talk
to someone I love...



And then I feel better.

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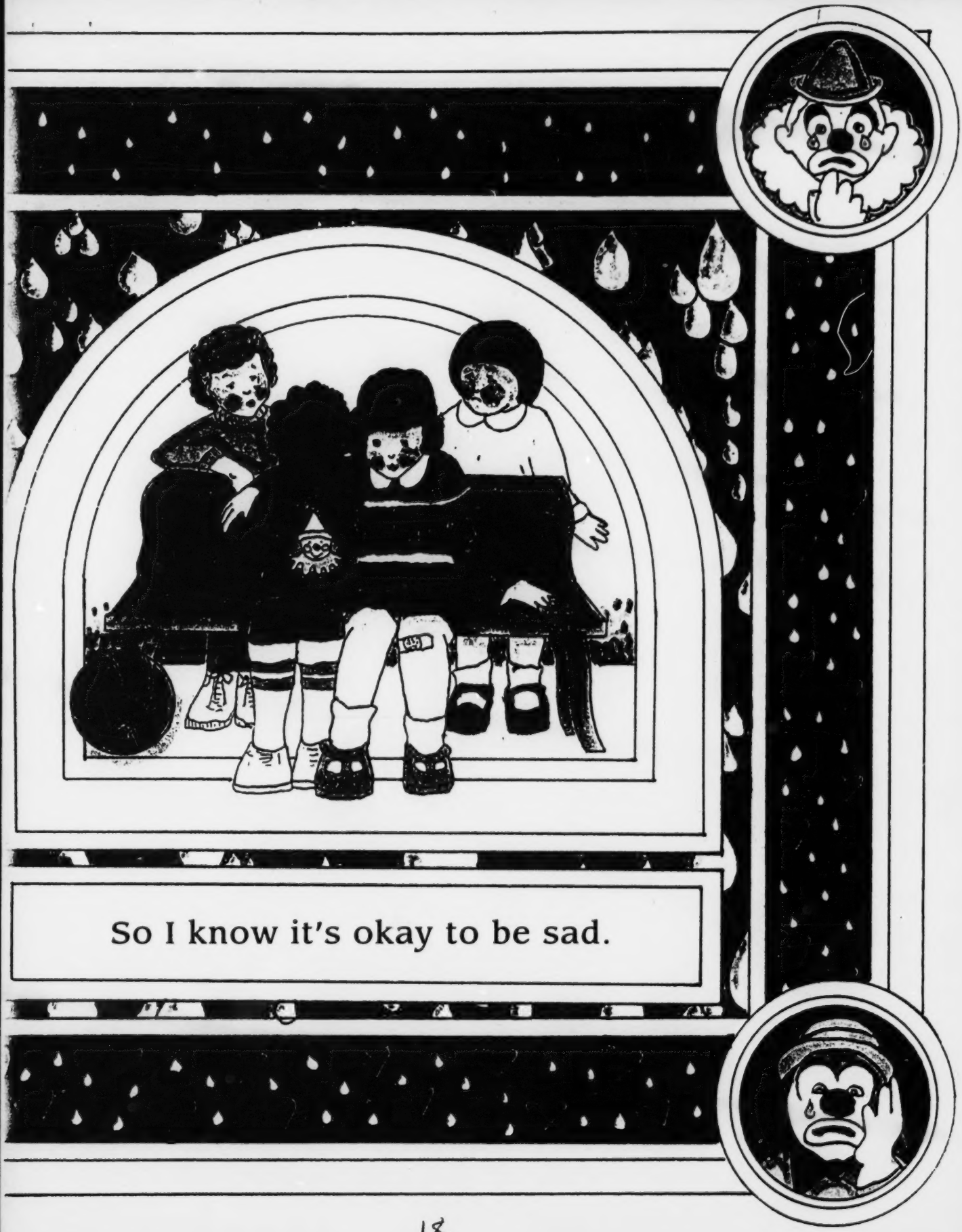
When I feel sad,

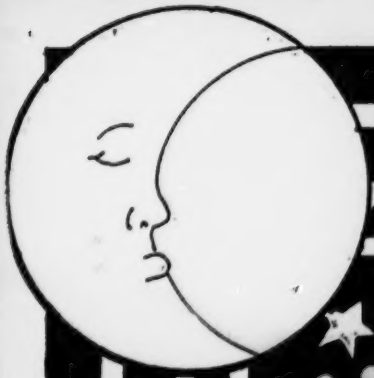
I need to cry.

I need a hug.

I need to tell someone
about my sadness...



So I know it's okay to be sad.



When I feel scared,

Scared of the dark,

Scared of people and
things I don't know,

I need to feel protected
by someone I trust...

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I need to feel safe.

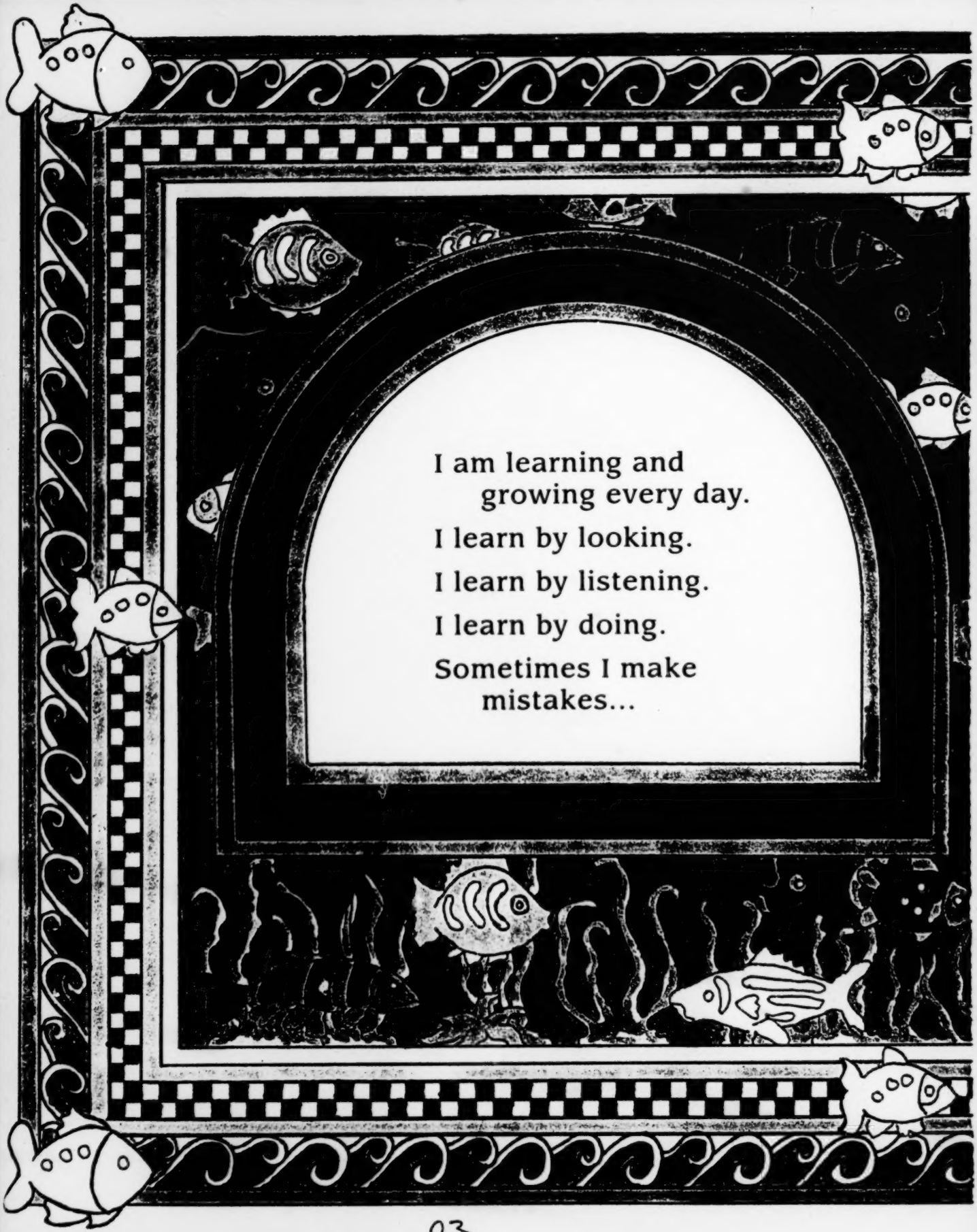
When I feel love,

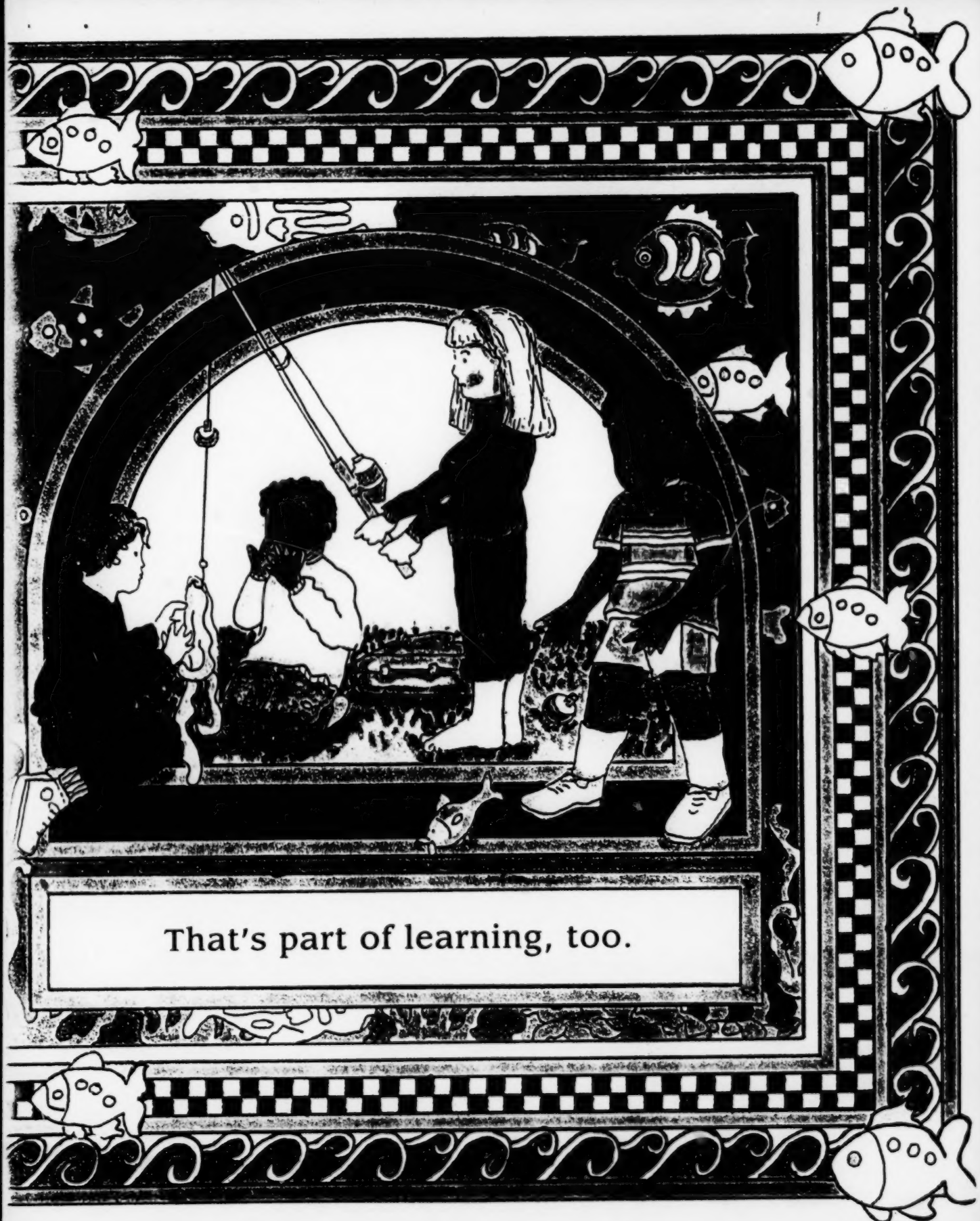
I feel warm and snuggly.

I feel happy and safe.

I feel important
and special...

I can love myself.


I am learning and
growing every day.
I learn by looking.
I learn by listening.
I learn by doing.
Sometimes I make
mistakes...



That's part of learning, too.

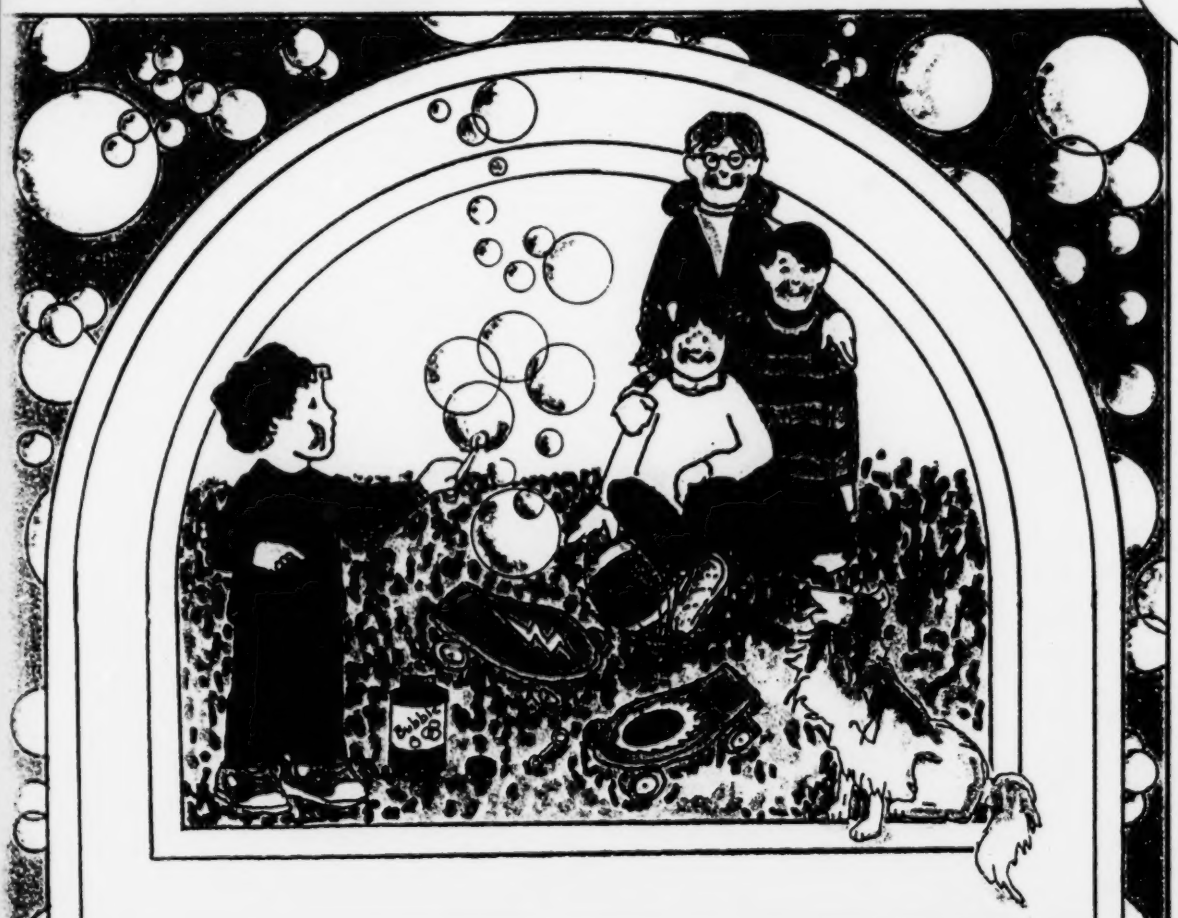
I can make decisions.

Sometimes I say "yes."

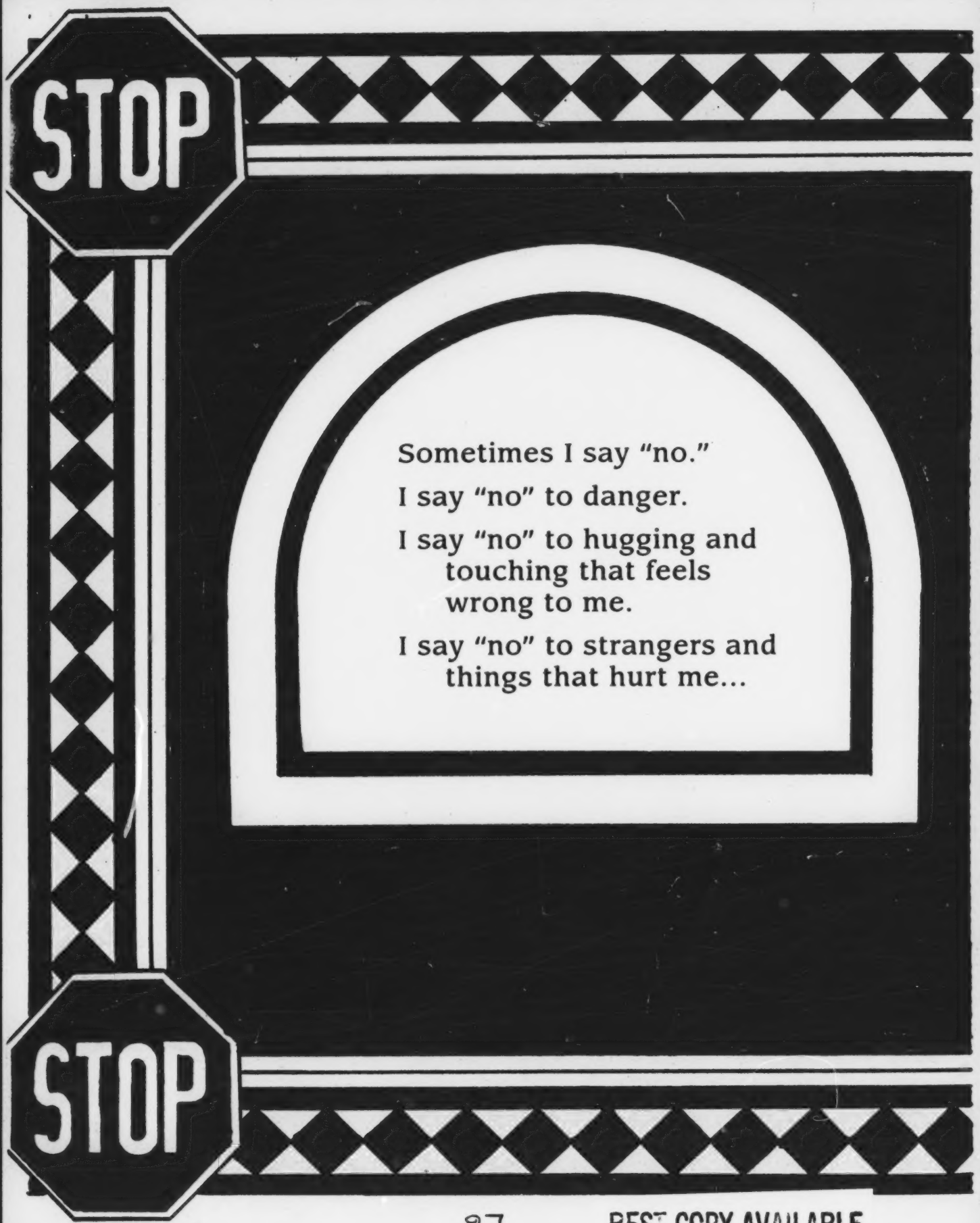
I say "yes" to playing
and dancing.

I say "yes" to laughing
and singing.

I say "yes" to hugging
and touching...



When it feels right to me.


STOP
Sometimes I say "no."
I say "no" to danger.
I say "no" to hugging and touching that feels wrong to me.
I say "no" to strangers and things that hurt me...
STOP

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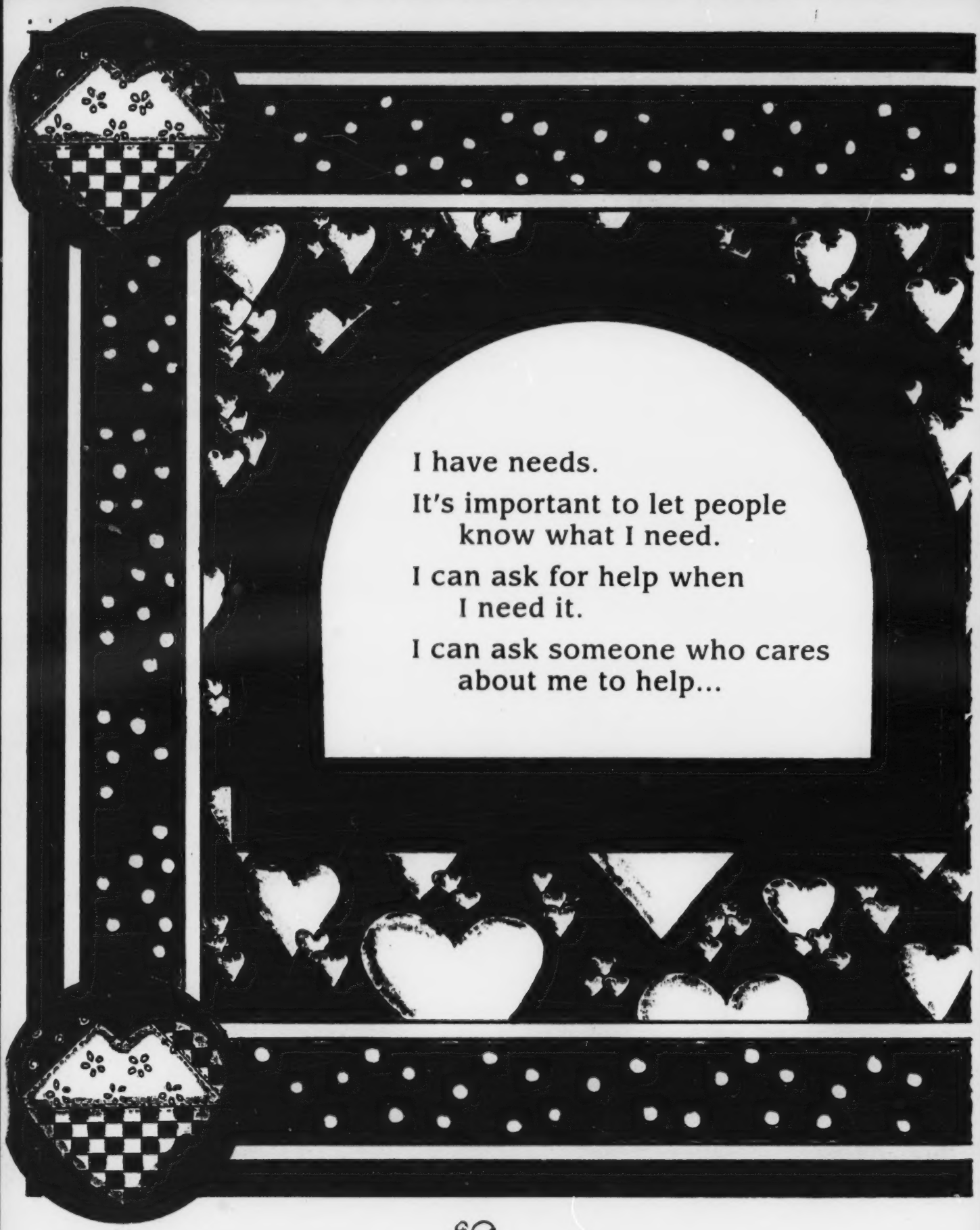
I can decide. It's up to me.



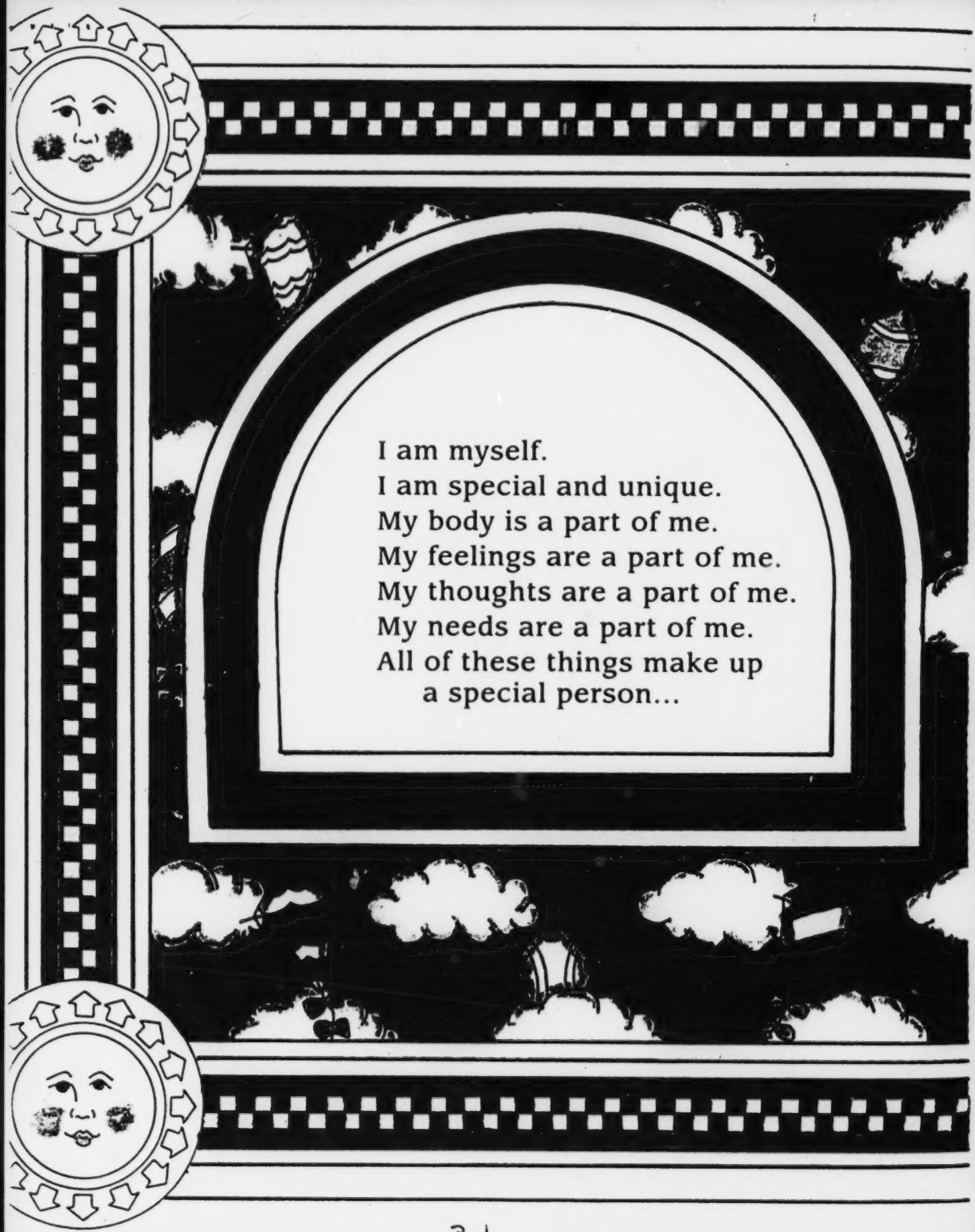
I have needs.

It's important to let people know what I need.

I can ask for help when I need it.

I can ask someone who cares about me to help...

And then I know I'm not alone.


I am myself.
I am special and unique.
My body is a part of me.
My feelings are a part of me.
My thoughts are a part of me.
My needs are a part of me.
All of these things make up
a special person...

Me.

Author **Lauren Murphy Payne, M.S.W.,** is a psychotherapist in private practice. Illustrator **Claudia Rohling** has created many popular prints and greeting cards. Together they are the co-founders of The Turning Point, a speaking and consulting service. They both live in Racine, Wisconsin.

Also available:

A Leader's Guide to Just Because I Am. The companion to the children's book is a complete introductory course on self-esteem for young children.

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SELF-HELP FOR KIDS®

Just Because I Am

A Child's Book of Affirmation

Strengthen and support a child's self-esteem with these warm, simple words and gentle, appealing illustrations. Little ones learn that they are special "not because of things I do, not because of what I look like, not because of what I have... just because I am." They learn to respect their bodies and acknowledge their needs. They name and own important feelings, discover that everyone makes mistakes, and hear that it's okay to say "yes" and "no." As adult leaders—parents, teachers, day-care providers, counselors, family members, and friends—it's our responsibility to give children these affirming, empowering messages. JUST BECAUSE I AM is a wonderful way to begin.

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to

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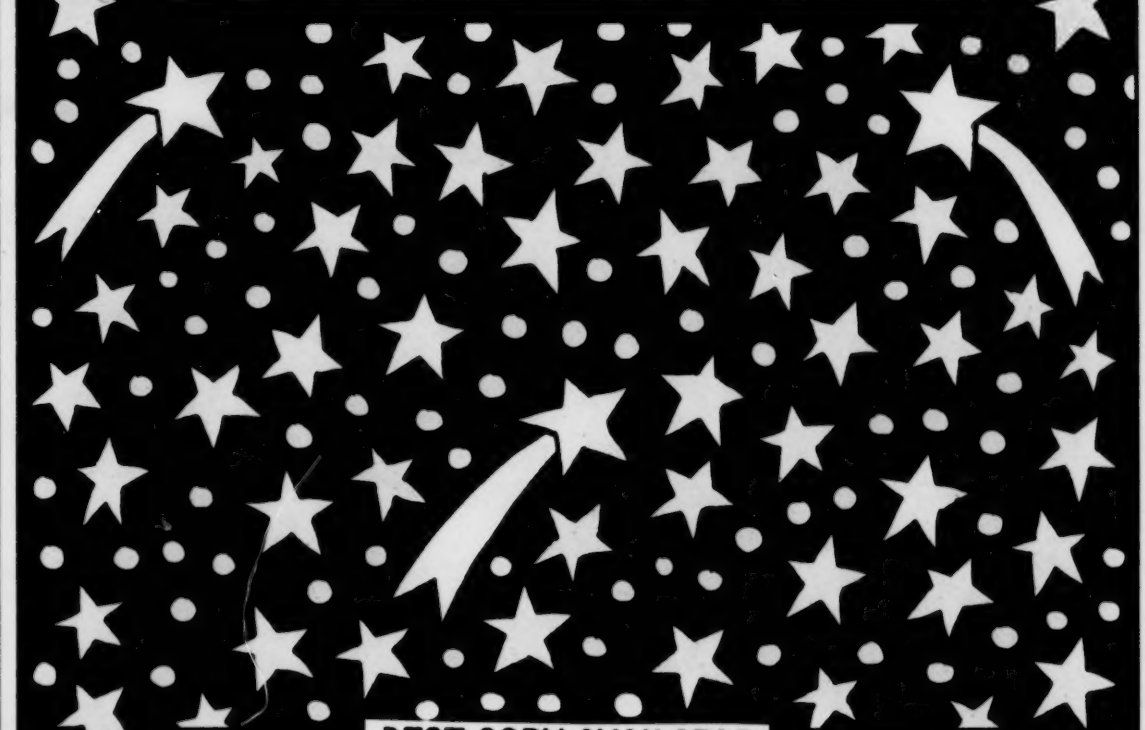

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and Claudia Rohling

Illustrations by Claudia Rohling

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We would like to thank our publisher, Judy Galbraith, our editor, Pamela Espeland, and our art editor, Nancy Tuminelly, for believing in our dreams and for working closely with us to validate children of all races, creeds, and genders.

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Contents

List of Reproducible Pages iv

Introduction 1

Lesson One:
I Am a Person 5

Lesson Two:
This Is My Body 8

Lesson Three:
My Body Talks to Me 12

Lesson Four:
Sometimes I Have Strong Feelings 15

Lesson Five:
When I Feel Angry 18

Lesson Six:
When I Feel Sad 23

Lesson Seven:
When I Feel Scared 27

Lesson Eight:
When I Feel Love 31

Lesson Nine:
I Am Learning and Growing Every Day 34

Lesson Ten:
I Can Make Decisions 38

Lesson Eleven:
Sometimes I Say "No" 41

Lesson Twelve:
I Have Needs 45

Lesson Thirteen:
I Am Myself, Special and Unique 48

Recommended Reading 51

About the Authors 52

List of Reproducible Pages

Dear Parents Letters 3–4
50 Things to Like about Children 7
Body Outline 10
Body Messages Chart 11
50 Ways to Take Care of Yourself 14
Angry Cloud 20
25 Healthy Ways to Express Anger 21
When Your Child Is Angry 22
25 Healthy Ways to Deal with Sadness 25
When Your Child Is Sad 26
25 Ways to Help Children Feel Safe and Secure 29
When Your Child Is Afraid 30
How to Help Your Child Feel Loved 33
Glasses Patterns 36
When Your Child Makes Mistakes 37
50 Ways to Say "Yes" to Children 40
25 Ways to Say "No" 43
25 Things Children Need 47
I Am Special 50

Introduction

Every child deserves to believe that she or he is truly a wonder. Every child *needs* to believe this. Nothing is as important as self-esteem to a child's well-being and success. Positive self-esteem increases a child's ability to be happy, healthy, and well-adjusted. Children's feelings about themselves affect all the choices they make and shape their plans, hopes, and dreams for the future. Many social and psychological problems can be traced to a lack of self-esteem.

Together with the children's book, *Just Because I Am: A Child's Book of Affirmation,* this Leader's Guide is a complete course on self-esteem for young children. It is based on three core beliefs:

- That all children are inherently valuable without regard to gender, race, religion, family background, economic status, appearance, abilities, health, possessions, or any other factor.
- That all children have the right to feel good about themselves exactly as they are.
- That a child's value is unconditional. Nothing the child does, says, or chooses can change it.

The children's book introduces several important concepts that strengthen and support self-esteem. The Leader's Guide helps you to teach and reinforce those concepts in a hands-on, experiential way that's fun for everyone.

How to Use This Book

A Leader's Guide to Just Because I Am has been designed to be used in almost any setting where children happen to be: kindergarten, early elementary school, preschool, day care, home, church or temple school, counseling group, and so on. The activities make full use of children's natural curiosity and creativity. Through reading, listening, questioning, creating, laughing, and loving, children learn that they are unique and special individuals, valuable as they are just because they are.

Before beginning the lessons, please read the children's book. Think about the words and what they mean to you. Look at the pictures and, if you like, invent stories to go with each one. You will be sharing the words and pictures with the children in your group. You may want to ask the children to invent stories to go with the pictures, and it will help to get them started if you are prepared with a few examples to share.

On page 3 you will find a letter to parents announcing and introducing *Just Because I Am.* If you are presenting this program in a school or group setting, you will want to make photocopies of this letter to send home to the parents of the children in your group.

On page 4 you will find a second letter to parents that you may want to use when you send program materials home with the children.

The children's book is divided into two-page sections that emphasize specific concepts in self-esteem. This Leader's Guide is divided into chapters that correspond to the children's book sections. Each chapter has four parts:

- an opening statement about the concept being presented,
- a series of goals that describe the main ideas you will be communicating and what you hope to achieve,
- several activities to try with the children, and
- suggestions for follow-up that reinforce the concepts taught in the lesson.

Most chapters also include one or more home handouts for you to photocopy and send home to parents.

The activities offer a variety of ways to teach the concepts and achieve the goals identified for each lesson. They are meant to be completely flexible. You may do them in any order, expand on them, adapt them, even eliminate some. Do whatever works best with the children in your group, depending on their interests and attention spans.

The follow-up activities encourage the children to reflect on what they have learned in the lesson and how it applies to their lives. You may do these in the classroom right after the lesson or wait until the following day or a later date. Again, it all depends on what works best with your group.

Please keep in mind that in doing the activities and follow-ups, your goal is not to control or define the children's behavior. There is no "right" way to learn about self-esteem. There are no "right" answers to the questions, no "right" approaches to the activities. Allow children to access their own best ways of learning. Here are two suggestions that will help you to do this:

- Try to limit your input into the mechanics of doing the activities. Some children will color outside the lines, give silly-sounding answers to questions, or draw things that seem to have no relation to what they "should be" drawing. After all, they are children!
- Remind yourself often that all children have strengths. Some children's strengths may not be immediately evident. It's up to you to find something positive in *every* child in your group. Focus on strengths and minimize the attention you give to behaviors you would like to see less of.

We encourage you to use your own instincts, creativity, and imagination when presenting this course in self-esteem. Our ideas may spark your ideas, and our lessons might be jumping-off points for wonderful learning experiences you invent.

Finally, *have fun.* If you communicate to the children that you are enjoying these lessons, they will enjoy them, too. What could be more fun than learning how special you are?

Lauren Murphy Payne
Claudia Rohling

Dear Parents:

I am writing to tell you about an exciting new course that we will be starting very soon. It's called JUST BECAUSE I AM, and it helps young children to develop and strengthen their self-esteem.

Self-esteem is very important to your child's well-being and success. Positive self-esteem increases a child's ability to be happy, healthy, and well-adjusted. Children's feelings about themselves affect all the choices they make and shape their plans, hopes, and dreams for the future.

JUST BECAUSE I AM has thirteen lessons. The lessons are based on the picture book titled *Just Because I Am: A Child's Book of Affirmation.* The picture book uses simple statements and colorful illustrations to communicate important messages about self-esteem. The lessons include questions and activities that reinforce these messages in a way that's fun for everyone.

During the course, you'll receive several "home handouts" related to the lessons. These handouts will keep you in touch with the concepts we're exploring in JUST BECAUSE I AM and will offer suggestions for you to try at home.

We will begin the course on _____.
If you have any questions or comments at this time or any time during the course, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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Dear Parents:

Attached are some materials from JUST BECAUSE I AM, the self-esteem course in which your child is participating. I'm sending you these materials because:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If you have any questions about these materials or about JUST BECAUSE I AM, please be sure to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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LESSON ONE
I Am a Person

It is important for children to be told that their value and their worth are not related to external factors such as what they do, look like, or have. Their value lies in who they are, solely because they were born.

GOALS

1. To help children identify things that are valuable about themselves.
2. To teach children that it is who they are, not what they do, that is important.

Examples

"I like to play"
is better than
"I'm a good soccer player."

"I like to sing"
is better than
"I'm a good singer."

"I'm friendly"
is better than
"Everybody likes me."

The danger in letting children define themselves in terms of what they are "good at" is that we can't all be good at everything, nor should we try. Our value lies in being who we are and enjoying the things we do. If we connect self-esteem to ability, then self-esteem will fluctuate as abilities do. We want to anchor self-esteem firmly to the child himself or herself so that no matter what the performance may be, the self-esteem remains high.

3. To reinforce what children like about themselves.

Activities

1. The "I Like Me!" Banner

Materials needed:

- Paper: Computer paper; the reverse side of shelf paper; rolls of brown packaging paper (check local office supply stores or post offices); cut-open grocery bags
- Decorations: Crayons, paints, markers, glitter, glue, sequins, feathers, buttons, photos, magazine cutouts, tape, etc.

Have each child make a banner to celebrate her or his uniquenesses. The children can decorate their banners with words, symbols, pictures—whatever they choose.

2. Block Letter Names

Materials needed:

- Paper (see Activity #1)
- Decorations (see Activity #1)
- Alphabet stencils

Print each child's first name in large block letters. Have the children decorate their names. Afterward, point out that each name is decorated differently—even if the name is the same. Discuss that we are all different, and we bring our uniqueness to everything we do.

For large groups, these block letter names could be adapted for use as name tags.

3. "What I Like about You Is..."

Identify five (or ten!) things you like about each child. Tell him or her often. For ideas, see the Home Handout for this lesson, "50 Things to Like about Children."

Follow-up

1. Ask the children, "What are the things you like about yourself?" Reinforce what they say.
2. Help the children to understand the difference between achievement and enjoyment.

   Examples

   The child says:
   "I'm a great soccer player!"

   You say:
   "You really like playing soccer!"

   The child says:
   "I'm the best singer!"

   You say:
   "You really like to sing!"
3. Copy the Home Handout for this lesson, "50 Things to Like about Children," to send home to parents.

50 THINGS TO LIKE ABOUT CHILDREN

1. Their never-ending energy.
2. Their incredible curiosity.
3. Their total innocence.
4. Their lighthearted laughter.
5. Their astonishing gentleness.
6. Their magical creativity.
7. Their extraordinary playfulness.
8. Their strong feelings.
9. Their desire to learn.
10. Their natural intelligence.
11. Their soaring spirit.
12. Their inspiring strength.
13. Their inquisitive minds.
14. Their precious vulnerability.
15. Their wondrous joy.
16. Their singular courage.
17. Their unconditional love.
18. Their tender kisses.
19. Their startling honesty.
20. Their willingness to learn.
21. Their exceptional enthusiasm.
22. Their boundless challenges.
23. Their miraculous bodies.
24. Their warm and loving hugs.
25. Their silliness.
26. Their sadness.
27. Their remarkable openness.
28. Their willingness to help.
29. Their explosive anger.
30. Their amazing bravery.
31. Their limitless hopes.
32. Their surprising stories.
33. Their sparkling magic.
34. Their freshness.
35. Their cuddly warmth.
36. Their uncommon thoughts.
37. Their expressive voices—loud, soft, and everything in between.
38. Their happiness.
39. Their nimble agility.
40. Their faith in the future.
41. Their many differences.
42. Their limitless humor.
43. Their burning intensity.
44. Their incomparable individuality.
45. Their unique talents.
46. Their astounding appetite.
47. Their snuggly softness.
48. Their love for dirt.
49. Their joyful music.
50. Their inexhaustible dreams.

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LESSON TWO
This Is My Body

Inside each of us there is an instinct that tells us exactly what we need and when. We are all born with it. Children are not far away from their natural instinct. They need to be reminded that they know what they need and that they can trust themselves.

GOALS

1. To help children become aware of the internal "voice" that tells them about the things that they need.
2. To make children aware of their instincts and teach them to honor their needs in appropriate ways.

ACTIVITY

Body Tracing

Materials needed:

- Paper: Blank newsprint, butcher paper, or other large pieces of paper
- Markers

OR

- Copies of the Body Outline on page 10

Either have each child lie down on a large piece of paper and trace his or her body, or give each child a copy of the Body Outline.

When every child has a tracing or outline, talk with them about the messages their bodies send them. Ask questions like:

- "How do you know that you are tired? What does being tired feel like?"
- "What are the things you can do for your body when you are tired?"

You can ask the same questions about being hungry and being sick.

NOTE: Be sure to collect the body tracings or body outlines at the end of this lesson. You will use them again in Lesson Three. Write each child's name on her or his tracing or outline.

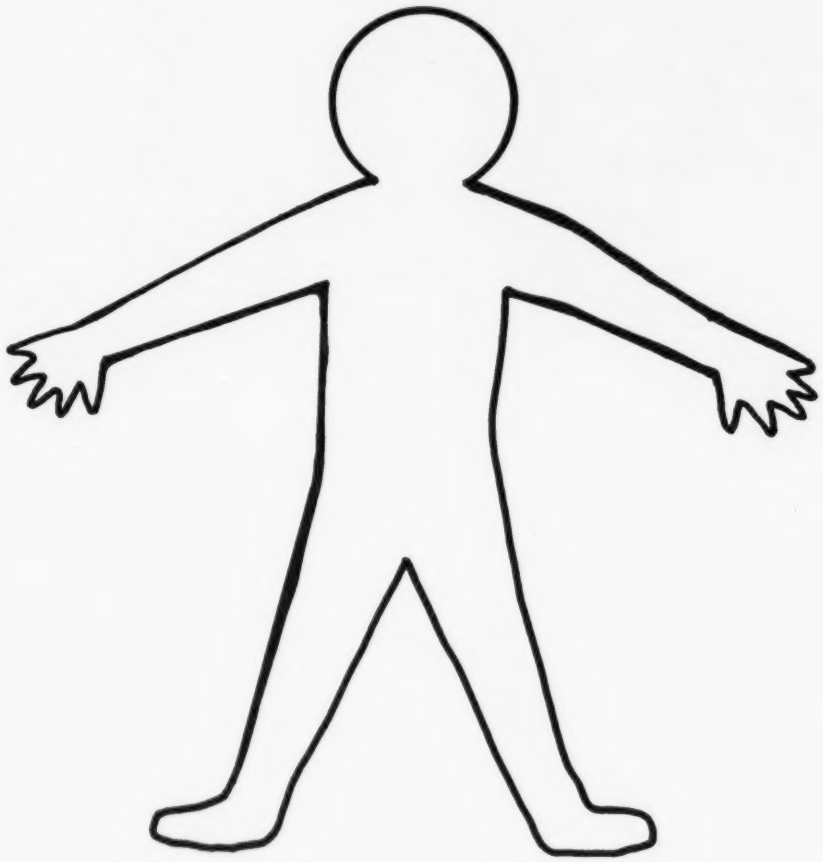
FOLLOW-UP

1. Help children recognize the clues their bodies send them. Reinforce positive caretaking with comments like:

- "I like how you listen to your body."
- "I'm proud of the way you're learning to take care of yourself!"
- "Learning to listen to your body is very important!"
- "Your body is telling you something important!"
- "What is your body telling you?"
- "What do you think your body is saying to you right now?"
- "You're really learning to take care of yourself! Great job!"
- "Great decision!"
- "You're doing great!"

2. Copy the Home Handout for this lesson, "Body Messages," to send home to parents. You may choose to include a note to parents asking them to complete the chart with their child.

LESSON TWO HANDOUT



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Body Messages Chart

Question	*Examples*	*Your Body Messages*
How do you know when your body needs sleep?	My eyes feel heavy My legs hurt	
How do you know when you are hungry?	My teeth want to chew My tummy feels empty	
How do you know when you are full?	My tummy feels happy I can't eat any more	
What does it feel like when you're cold?	I feel like a popsicle I have the shivers	
What does it feel like when you're warm?	I feel warm like fire It feels like sunshine	
How do you know if your body is sick?	I don't feel well I feel hot all over	
How do you know when you need to go to the bathroom?	I feel too full My tummy hurts	
How do you know when your body needs exercise?	I feel like jumping I have lots of energy	

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LESSON THREE
My Body Talks to Me

Children need to learn to accept and value their own bodies. This is essential in teaching them to respect and care for themselves.

GOALS

1. To help children develop an appreciation for their own bodies and their unique strengths.
2. To create tolerance and respect for all bodies regardless of individual strengths, weaknesses, size, color, or special challenges.

ACTIVITIES

1. Changes

Materials needed:

- Body tracings or body outlines from Lesson Two
- Decorations: Crayons, paints, markers, glitter, glue, sequins, feathers, buttons, photos, magazine cutouts, tape, etc.

Using the body tracings or body outlines from Lesson Two, talk with the children about how their bodies are changing.

If you did body tracings in Lesson Two, ask, "How is this picture different than it would have been last year? How have you changed?"

If you used the body outline in Lesson Two, give them to the children and say, "There is nobody in the world just like you."

Have the children decorate their body tracings or outlines.

2. Sensations

Do some stretching and range-of-motion exercises with the children. Help them become aware of the different sensations in each movement.

Tell the children: "Stretch your body tall toward the ceiling—feel how tall you are!...Now crouch down low to the ground. Curl up tight as a ball. Feel how different that feels!"

Repeat this idea with stretching exercises for the arms, legs, fingers, and toes.

Afterward, tell the children something like the following:

"Your body is a wonder. All bodies are beautiful. All bodies have their own unique strengths and weaknesses. All bodies have special challenges. It is not only children with physical disabilities who are specially challenged. Even children who do not have any physical disabilities may have a hard time sitting still or a hard time with reading or learning."

NOTE: Make sure that the children understand the meaning of the term "physical disabilities." Explain if necessary and give examples.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Find out more about the children's beliefs and attitudes concerning their bodies. Ask questions like:

- "What do you like about your body?"
- "What things does your body like to do?"
- "What things does your body do well?"
- "What things are hard for your body to do?"

2. Have the children finish these sentences verbally. Go around the group and make sure that everyone who wants to has the opportunity to contribute.

- I like to listen to _____.
- I like to smell _____.
- I like to taste _____.
- I like to look at _____.
- I like the way my body feels when I _____.

3. Copy the Home Handout for this lesson, "50 Ways to Take Care of Yourself," to send home to parents. You may choose to include a note to parents encouraging them to share the ideas with their child.

50 Ways to Take Care of Yourself

Ideas for kids...and parents

1. Rest when you're tired.
2. Cry when you're sad.
3. Learn when to say NO.
4. Play with your favorite toys.
5. Ride a merry-go-round.
6. Eat healthy food.
7. Go for a walk with someone you love.
8. Brush your teeth.
9. Play with your best friends.
10. Hug a stuffed animal.
11. Say nice things to yourself.
12. Learn how to talk about your feelings.
13. Take a bath.
14. Be angry when you need to be.
15. Listen to the birds.
16. Read a book.
17. Color.
18. Laugh.
19. Eat when you're hungry. Stop when you're full.
20. Talk to someone who really understands.
21. Make a new friend.
22. Exercise.
23. Listen to the rain.
24. Be honest with yourself and others.
25. Ask for help when you need it.
26. Play in water.
27. Wear your favorite clothes.
28. Look at the stars.
29. Plant something.
30. Pick some flowers for yourself.
31. Learn to listen to your body.
32. Get your back rubbed.
33. Write on your sidewalk with chalk.
34. Play make-believe.
35. Do something nice for someone else.
36. Listen to music.
37. Paint a picture.
38. Make a tent.
39. Learn about something new.
40. Turn off the television.
41. Listen to the silence inside of you.
42. Take a nap.
43. Get a hug.
44. Spend some time with someone who lets you be yourself.
45. Wrap yourself in a blanket.
46. Help someone who needs help.
47. Blow bubbles.
48. Sing a song.
49. Give yourself a big hug.
50. CELEBRATE YOU!!!

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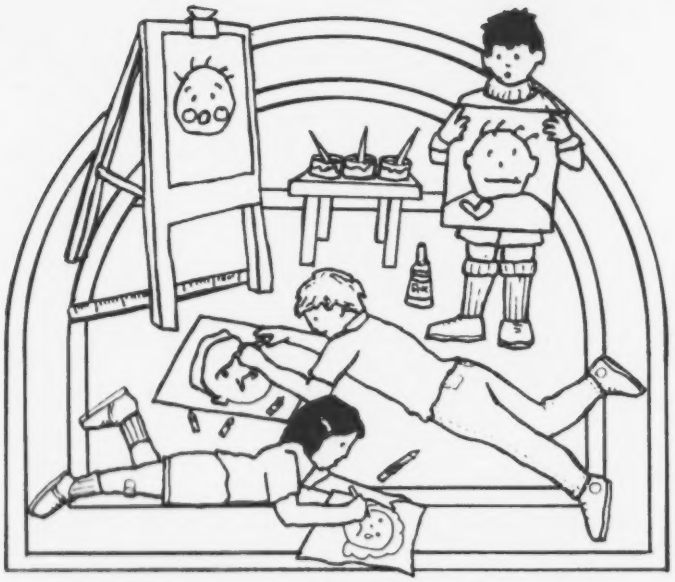

LESSON FOUR
Sometimes I Have Strong Feelings

Children need to have access to the complete range of their feelings. They need to be taught that all of their feelings are important signals, and that important information lies behind each of their feelings. They need to learn to recognize and respond appropriately to their personal "signals."

GOALS

1. To help children learn to locate and identify their feelings inside their bodies.
2. To teach children about the variety of feelings that are part of daily living.
3. To begin to teach children a variety of ways to deal with and experience their feelings.

ACTIVITIES

1. Feelings Jar

Materials needed:

- Small or medium jar (such as an empty clear plastic peanut butter jar)
- Items symbolizing various feelings: crushed pieces of aluminum foil or cut-up pieces of ribbon for anger, sequins for tears, rice for fear, bird seed for love, glitter for happiness, etc.

Mix together in a jar various items symbolizing different feelings. As you do this, tell the children, "Each type of thing I'm putting in the jar stands for a feeling. _____ stands for anger. _____ stands for sadness. _____ stands for fear..." and so on until you have put everything into the jar.

When the jar is ready, say, "This jar is like each of us—like you, and you, and you, and me. We all have many different feelings inside of us. These feelings are a part of us."

NOTE: Keep the Feelings Jar on display in the classroom for the duration of *Just Because I Am*—and after. Refer to it whenever the topic of feelings comes up. When certain children have strong feelings, you may want to let them keep the jar with them for a day. You might also encourage children to bring their own "feelings symbols" to add to the jar. Or, as a special project, you might have the children make their own Feelings Jars. This is a wonderful tool; don't limit its use to this lesson!

2. Sharing Feelings

Talk with the children about the wide range of feelings they might experience. Ask questions like:

- "What are some strong feelings that you have?"
- "What do your feelings feel like?"
- "Can you tell the difference between your feelings? (For example, does anger feel the same as fear?)"
- "Where do you feel your feelings in your body?"
- "Who can you talk to and tell about your strong feelings?"

Share with the children your own strong feelings about situations in your life. One of the most powerful ways to teach children is by *modeling*—demonstrating by example what it is you're trying to teach. When you show the children that you are comfortable with having and expressing your feelings, this teaches them that their feelings are normal and acceptable, too.

NOTE: Obviously this needs to be done at an age-appropriate level. While it's important for adults to share their feelings with children, avoid providing overwhelming or inappropriate details.

You might say something like:

- "I'm feeling really sad about losing my wallet."
- "I'm really excited about the holidays this year."
- "I'm very angry about the argument I had this morning."
- "I was so embarrassed when I dropped the milk and it spilled all over!"
- "I felt really bad about losing my temper."
- "I was totally surprised when I found the flower on my desk today."
- "The movie really scared me."
- "I'm so happy that my friend will be visiting me."

FOLLOW-UP

1. Reinforce the children's right to have and feel their feelings. They need to understand that their feelings and the ways they experience them are accurate and appropriate for them. They need to have their problems, fears, and concerns acknowledged. You might say things like:

- "I can see that you feel really angry right now!"
- "You seem to be so happy about your new baby sister."
- "You might be feeling jealous of your new baby sister."
- "You've had a hard day today."
- "I can tell how excited you are."
- "You're feeling very sad right now."
- "It's hard work to be a kid!"

- "You're very frustrated with that."
- "You look very surprised."

2. Children need to be shown how to handle their feelings appropriately. Start teaching this by asking questions like:

- "What do you think you can do about that?"
- "How are you going to handle that?"
- "What do you think you will do next?"

This gets children thinking about their options and developing problem-solving skills. It's also an excellent way to let children know that you trust them and their abilities.

Be sure to affirm a child's problem-solving ideas, even if the idea itself isn't practical or appropriate.

Example

You say:
"I'm sorry to hear that Erica broke your toy. What do you think you will do about it?"

The child says:
"I want to beat her up!"

You say:
"You are really angry!"

The child says:
"Yes I am! I'm so mad I could punch her!"

You say:
"What do you think might happen if you do that?"

The child says:
"I'll get in trouble."

You say:
"What about Erica?"

The child says:
"She might get hurt."

You say:
"I know you don't want to get in trouble or hurt Erica. So what can you do instead of punching her?"

This exchange is helpful in three ways:

- It validates the child's feelings without offering solutions.
- It allows the child to express her anger without being judged as "bad."
- It allows the child to explore some possible ways to handle the situation, as well as some possible consequences of each choice.

LESSON FIVE
When I Feel Angry

Anger is an important part of life. It is a signal that something in our lives needs attention. Children need to know that anger is a safe and valuable emotion. They need to know that they can experience anger—their own or someone else's. They need to be taught safe, effective, and appropriate ways of handling their own anger.

GOALS

1. To familiarize children with their anger.
2. To teach children to recognize their anger as an important body signal.
3. To teach children appropriate ways to respond to and deal with their anger.

ACTIVITIES

1. Body Outline

Materials needed:

- Copies of the Body Outline on page 10

OR

- Paper or tracing paper, colored pencils, markers, crayons, etc. so children can trace the Body Outline or draw their own

Give each child a Body Outline or time and materials to create their own. Have children identify the places in their bodies where they feel anger. Have them label the outline "Anger."

2. Angry Cloud

Materials needed:

- Copies of the Angry Cloud on page 20

Give each child an Angry Cloud. Talk with the children about how anger is like a storm cloud. Explain that their anger can be released like the rain.

Help the children talk about the things that make them angry. Ask questions like:

- "What does it feel like when you get angry?"
- "Where do you feel anger in your body?"
- "What can you do when you are angry to let out your angry feelings?"
- "What is *not* okay for you to do when you're angry?"

Talk with the children about ways to get anger out of their bodies. Explain acceptable and non-acceptable ways to release anger. For ideas, see the Home Handout for this lesson, "25 Healthy Ways to Express Anger."

3. Who Can Help?

Ask the children, "When you're angry, who can you talk to and tell about your anger?" Help the children identify adults who can help them to process their angry feelings.

Instruct the children to take their Angry Clouds home with them. Suggest that when they are having an "angry day," they can post the Angry Cloud on their bedroom door or some other prominent place to alert family members. If there is time, you may want to let them color their cloud pictures.

FOLLOW-UP

Copy the Home Handouts for this lesson, "25 Healthy Ways to Express Anger" and "When Your Child Is Angry," to send home to parents. You may choose to include a note to parents encouraging them to talk with their child about anger and explaining how important it is to affirm all of the feelings their child has.

LESSON FIVE HANDOUT

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25 Healthy Ways to Express Anger

Be careful not to say or do anything to hurt yourself or anyone else.

1. Tell someone you're angry.
2. Talk to yourself in the mirror about your anger.
3. Hit a pillow.
4. Jump up and down.
5. Cry.
6. Hit the floor with a rolled-up newspaper.
7. Smash play dough or clay.
8. Hit a bed with your fist.
9. Yell "I'M SO ANGRY!!!"
10. Tear and crumple up newspapers, magazines, or old phone books and fill a garbage bag.
11. Go into a safe room to get some "space."
12. Walk away.
13. Lie on a bed with your feet in the air. Kick your feet back and forth and yell "AHHHHH!" or "I'M ANGRY!!!"
14. Take a small towel and use to hit a couch or chair while saying "I'm so angry!"
15. Play an angry song on the piano.
16. Beat a drum.
17. Do an angry dance.
18. Bounce or kick a ball.
19. Dig in dirt.
20. Go swimming; hit the water.
21. Throw rocks into a pond, lake, or ocean.
22. Get a hug.
23. Rake leaves or shovel snow.
24. Run.
25. Swing.

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When Your Child Is Angry

Like adults, children get angry sometimes. They may not get angry about the same things we do, and the things that anger them may sometimes seem insignificant to us, but their anger is just as real as ours.

It's important to listen to and affirm children's anger. Don't dispute or discount their experiences or feelings. It's vital to children's self-esteem that their feelings be accepted unconditionally, without debate. If a child feels angry, there is a reason, even if we as adults may not be able to see it or agree with it. To deny a child's anger or make light of it is a mistake. Children may learn from this that they can't trust themselves or their feelings, and they may come to think that their feelings don't matter.

The best way to affirm and acknowledge your child's anger is simply to reflect back the information that the child gives you.

Instead of saying:

- "What are you getting so upset about?"
- "It's not that bad!"
- "Good girls/boys don't get angry."
- "You shouldn't feel that way."
- "You shouldn't say that."
- "It's not nice to get angry."
- "You have nothing to be angry about."
- "Maybe Santa Claus is watching and you won't get any toys for Christmas!"
- "You don't know what real problems are."
- "I hate you too!"

Try saying:

- "I'm glad you can tell me how you feel!"
- "You are really angry right now!"
- "Everyone gets angry sometimes."
- "Anger is a part of living."
- "You are feeling very frustrated."
- "Wow, you sure are angry."
- "That happens sometimes."

Often this is all children need to work through and even get over their anger—a caring adult who takes the time to listen and say, "I understand how you feel and it's okay."

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LESSON SIX
When I Feel Sad

Children feel sadness for a variety of reasons. It is important that they be able to recognize their sadness for what it is and tell someone when they are feeling sad. They need to know that sadness is another part of life, and they need to have effective ways of communicating and resolving their sad feelings.

GOALS

1. To help children to recognize the things that make them sad.
2. To teach children to recognize their sadness as an important body signal.
3. To teach children appropriate ways to respond to and deal with their sadness.

ACTIVITIES

1. Body Outline

Materials needed:

- Copies of the Body Outline on page 10

OR

- Paper or tracing paper, colored pencils, markers, crayons, etc. so children can trace the Body Outline or draw their own

Give each child a Body Outline or time and materials to create their own. Have children identify the places in their bodies where they feel sadness. Help them label the outline "Sadness."

2. Clown Mask

Materials:

- A two-sided clown mask you have made ahead of time (one side a happy face, one side a sad face)

OR

- Paper, construction paper, colored pencils, markers, crayons, etc. and flat sticks (tongue depressors, popsicle sticks) so children can create their own two-sided clown masks. (Each child will need two pieces of paper. Have them draw a happy clown face on one piece of paper and a sad clown face on the other piece of paper. Put the faces back-to-back and fasten them to a flat stick. Children can hold up their two-sided clown masks and turn them to show the happy face or the sad face.)

Show the children the two-sided clown mask you have made. Tell them that sadness is the other side of happiness. Or give the children time and materials to create their own clown masks, then talk about the two sides/feelings.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Talk with the children about the things that make them sad. Ask, "What do you do when you are sad?" Help them to plan what they can do in the future when they are sad. For ideas, see the Home Handout for this lesson, "25 Healthy Ways to Deal with Sadness."
2. Copy the Home Handouts for this lesson, "25 Healthy Ways to Deal with Sadness" and "When Your Child Is Sad," to send home to parents. You may choose to include a note to parents encouraging them to talk with their child about sadness and healthy ways to deal with it.

25 Healthy Ways to Deal with Sadness

1. Cry.
2. Ask someone to help you write a poem.
3. Draw a picture.
4. Talk about your sadness with someone you trust.
5. Find some quiet time.
6. Take a deep breath.
7. Pet an animal.
8. Do something you like to do.
9. Get a hug.
10. If there is something you need, ask for it.
11. Take a walk.
12. Make a wish.
13. Take a bath.
14. Make sad faces in the mirror.
15. Remember that sadness is a part of life.
16. Rest.
17. Feed the birds.
18. Wrap yourself in a blanket.
19. Watch the clouds or the stars.
20. Listen to music.
21. Play with clay.
22. Listen to your body.
23. Watch a funny movie.
24. Look at your favorite book.
25. Play with your friends.

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When Your Child Is Sad

Children have many complex emotions, including sadness. It's important for children to know that it's okay for them to feel sad and that everyone feels sad sometimes.

Encourage your child to talk about his or her sad feelings, if he or she wants to talk. Some children will show their sadness but won't want to talk about it or won't know how to talk about it. Sometimes they won't even know why they are feeling sad, just that they are.

The best way to affirm and acknowledge your child's sadness is simply to reflect back the feeling messages your child gives you.

Instead of saying:

- "That's nothing to cry about!"
- "Stop that crying or I'll give you something to cry about!"
- "You don't know what real sadness is!"
- "You've got nothing to be sad about/to cry about."
- "Your crying is driving me crazy!"
- "If you're going to act like that, get away from me!"
- "Be a good girl and stop crying!"
- "Don't cry."
- "Big boys don't cry."
- "Be brave."

Try saying:

- "You're feeling really sad right now."
- "You look very sad."
- "It's okay to cry."
- "It's all right, go ahead and get it out."
- "I know how sadness feels."
- "It's important to listen to your sadness."
- "I get sad too sometimes."

Often this is all children need to start working through their sadness—someone who empathizes and says, "You're not alone."

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LESSON SEVEN
When I Feel Scared

It is important for children to live in an environment free from danger and fear — whether real or imagined. This is the most basic of human needs: the need for physical and psychological safety. Children must be made to feel safe and secure to insure their full and utmost growth.

GOALS

1. To validate children's experiences and fears; to let children know that fear is a normal part of daily life.
2. To help children become aware of the things they are afraid of.
3. To give children a sense of their power over the things in their lives that are frightening to them.
4. To help children identify ways of feeling safe.

ACTIVITIES

1. Body Outline

Materials needed:

- Copies of the Body Outline on page 10

OR

- Paper or tracing paper, colored pencils, markers, crayons, etc. so children can trace the Body Outline or draw their own

Give each child a Body Outline or time and materials to create their own. Have children illustrate what happens to them when they feel scared and color the places where they feel their feelings. Ask questions like:

- "What color is your stomach when you are afraid?"
- "Does your hair stand up on the back of your neck?"
- "Do you get goose bumps? Do you feel cold?"
- "Where else in your body do you feel afraid?"

Help them label their outline "Feeling Scared."

2. Ways to Feel Safe

Tell the children, "Being brave doesn't mean ignoring our fear. It means learning about the things that make us afraid and learning how to deal with our fear. When we do this, we start to have power over our fear."

Ask, "What are some things you can do to help yourself feel safe?" Allow time for discussion. You may want to list the children's responses on a chalkboard or poster paper.

3. The Bravery Medal

Materials needed:

- Circles or other shapes cut from cardboard
- Decorations: Rhinestones, coins, buttons, feathers, colored foils, ribbons, glitter, glue, etc.
- Safety pins
- Duct tape (to secure a safety pin to the back of each Bravery Medal)

Have the children affirm their bravery and courage by making bravery medals. Tell them that this will stand for their power in dealing with fear. When the children are finished decorating their medals, tape a safety pin to the back of each one and pin it to the child's shirt. You might want to turn this into a small ceremony by saying a few words of congratulations and affirmation to each child.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Talk with the children about the things that frighten them. Discuss the power they have over their fear and the choices they can make when it comes to handling feelings of being afraid.

   Ask questions like:

- "What does fear feel like to you?"
- "How do you know when you're scared?"
- "What kinds of things scare you?"
- "Who can you tell when you're scared?"
- "What do you need when you're scared?"
- "What are some things you can do when you're scared?"

2. Copy the Home Handouts for this lesson, "25 Ways to Help Children Feel Safe and Secure" and "When Your Child Is Afraid," to send home to parents. You may choose to include a note to parents encouraging them to talk with their child about fear and healthy ways to deal with it.

25 Ways to Help Children Feel Safe and Secure

1. Be available to them.
2. Don't tease or belittle them.
3. Ask them questions. Listen to and affirm their answers.
4. Teach them the difference between safe and unsafe behaviors.
5. Hug them.
6. Learn about the poisonous substances, if any, in your home (cleaning supplies, painting supplies, etc.) and keep them out of reach.
7. If your area has 911 service, teach them how to dial 911 in emergencies.
8. Respect their privacy.
9. Have a family "Fire Escape Plan" and practice it together.
10. Teach them what to do in an emergency.
11. Make sure that their immunizations are up-to-date.
12. Let them fall and be there to help them pick themselves up.
13. Know and work with their teachers.
14. Get to know your neighbors. Work together to make your neighborhood a safe place to live.
15. Let them make choices. Help them learn from their choices.
16. Teach them about appropriate touching behavior. Help them to distinguish what feels right from what feels wrong.
17. Let them know that they can count on you to help, no matter what.
18. Teach them not to play with matches.
19. Educate them about substance abuse, sexual abuse, and "strangers."
20. Know their friends and their friends' parents. Encourage them to choose their friends wisely.
21. Stay calm.
22. Let them know that there are other adults who care about them. Have your own safe network of friends. Make a list of five adults they can go to for help.
23. Feed them when they're hungry. Encourage them to rest when they're tired. Teach them to take good care of themselves.
24. Tuck them in at night.
25. Let them know you love them exactly as they are. Tell them often. Mean it. Act on it always.

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When Your Child Is Afraid

It seems that some children aren't afraid of anything while others are afraid of everything. It's easy to get impatient with a child who seems excessively timid. Children face a world that is full of uncertainties and frightening things, both imaginary and real.

It's important to validate every experience your child has with fear, even if you don't share those fears. Encourage your child to talk about his or her fears, if he or she wants to talk.

The best way to affirm and acknowledge your child's fears is simply to reflect back the feeling messages your child gives you.

Instead of saying:

- "That's nothing to be scared of!"
- "What are you making such a big deal for?"
- "Don't be such a baby!"
- "Act your age!"
- "Grow up!"
- "Don't be such a scaredy-cat!"
- "I'll give you something to cry about!"
- "Stop crying."
- "There's nothing to be afraid of."

Try saying:

- "That's really scary!"
- "I'm glad you can tell me what scares you."
- "That can feel scary sometimes."
- "Everybody gets scared."
- "It's okay to be scared."
- "I get scared too sometimes."

Often all children need is to know that someone bigger who loves them understands and respects their fears. This can give them the courage to face their fears and eventually overcome them.

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LESSON EIGHT
When I Feel Love

When children are loved, they learn that they are lovable, and they are able to love themselves and others. It is important for us as adults to know what makes our children feel loved. It is not only our ideas of love that matter. For children to feel special to themselves, they need to feel special to those around them.

GOALS

1. To help children identify the ways in which they feel loved.
2. To introduce children to the concept of self-love and the ways in which they can show love to themselves.
3. To reinforce the idea that all children are lovable, just as they are.

ACTIVITIES

1. The "I Love Myself" Necklace

Materials needed:

- Heart-shaped cookie cutter
- Pencil
- Cardboard
- Safety scissors
- Hole punch
- Colorful ribbons or long shoelaces

- Decorations: Crayons, paints, markers, glitter, glue, sequins, feathers, buttons, photos, magazine cutouts, tape, etc.

On cardboard, make several tracings of the heart-shaped cookie cutter—one for each child. Cut them out or invite the children to help you. Let the children decorate their hearts.

Punch two holes through the top of each decorated heart. String lengths of colorful ribbon or shoelaces through the holes to make necklaces.

Tell the children, "This necklace stands for the love you have for yourself. When you wear it, everyone will be able to see that you love yourself."

2. Best Friends

Introduce the children to the concept that when they love themselves, they have a friend for life—someone they can count on, someone to trust, someone who will always be there for them.

Say, "One way we show that we love ourselves is by respecting ourselves. What are some ways you respect yourself?"

Allow time for discussion. You may want to list the children's responses on a chalkboard or poster paper.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Talk with the children about love. Ask questions like:

- "What does love feel like?"
- "How do you know when you're loved?"
- "Do you love yourself? How do you know? What do you do to show that you love yourself?"

2. Help the children to identify some of the things that make them feel loved. You might begin by sharing some examples from your own life. Model what you're trying to teach. You might say something like:

- "I feel loved when someone does something nice for me." (Give an example.)
- "I feel loved when someone I love gives me a hug."
- "I feel loved when someone spends time with me." (Give an example.)
- "I feel loved when someone helps me." (Give an example.)

Now invite the children to share loving examples and incidents from their lives.

3. Copy the Home Handout for this lesson, "How to Help Your Child Feel Loved," to send home to parents. You might choose to include a note to parents about the power and importance of expressing our love for others.

How to Help Your Child Feel Loved

More than anything, children need to know that their parents love them. This gives them the strong foundation they need to build other relationships throughout their lives.

It's important to show your love for your child—by actions, gestures, hugs, your attitude toward your child, the expression on your face when you look at him or her. It's also important to *tell* your child how very, very much you love him or her.

You probably do this already and often. But it's easy to get so caught up in our lives that we forget this basic and essential way of communicating our feelings. The next time you talk to your child about anything, try including one or more of these simple phrases:

"I love you."

"I love you a lot."

"I love you to pieces!"

"I love you tons and tons."

"I'll love you forever."

"I'll never stop loving you."

"You are very important to me."

"Nothing you could ever do would change my loving you."

"You are the greatest!"

"I love spending time with you."

"I love just being with you."

"I'm really glad to see you."

"I look forward to our time together."

"I'm glad you're here."

"I'm glad you're my son/daughter."

"I love you just the way you are."

"I started loving you even before you were born."

"I'm glad every day just because you're in my life."

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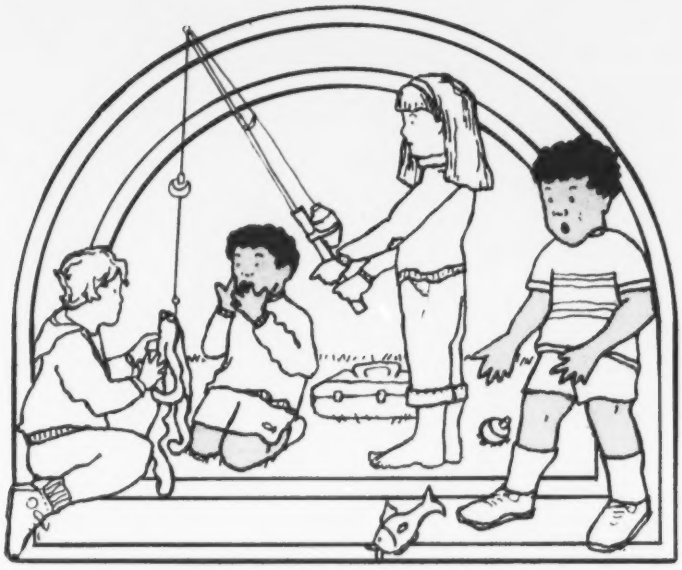


LESSON NINE

I Am Learning and Growing Every Day

Children need to know that learning takes many forms. It is not only in school that learning takes place. We all can learn every day in each moment of our lives. Children also need to know that mistakes present important opportunities for learning and growth.

GOALS

1. To reinforce the truth that everyone makes mistakes.
2. To introduce children to the idea that mistakes are a part of life and present opportunities for learning.
3. To help children find the learning in the mistakes they make.

ACTIVITIES

1. Everyone Makes Mistakes

Talk with the children about mistakes. Help them recognize that everyone makes mistakes—no matter how old they are, how smart they are, or who they are. Introduce the children to the idea that some of the most important learning we do comes from the mistakes we make.

Invite the children to tell about some of the mistakes they have made. In response, ask questions like:

- "How did you feel when that happened?"
- "Did that feel good?"
- "What can you learn from that?"
- "What will you do differently next time?"

Be sure to stress the positive nature of the learning experience rather than the mistake itself. Affirm the value of this learning by saying things like:

- "You really learned a lot from that!"
- "You'll be able to make a better choice next time!"
- "It's really a good thing that you learned that!"
- "I'm proud of the way you're learning."
- "You did a great job of thinking about that."
- "That's an important thing to learn."

2. A Different Way of Seeing

Materials needed:

- Copies of the glasses patterns on page 36
- Paper
- Safety scissors
- Colored pencils, markers, crayons
- Colored cellophane (several different colors)
- Tape
- Paper punch
- String or elastic

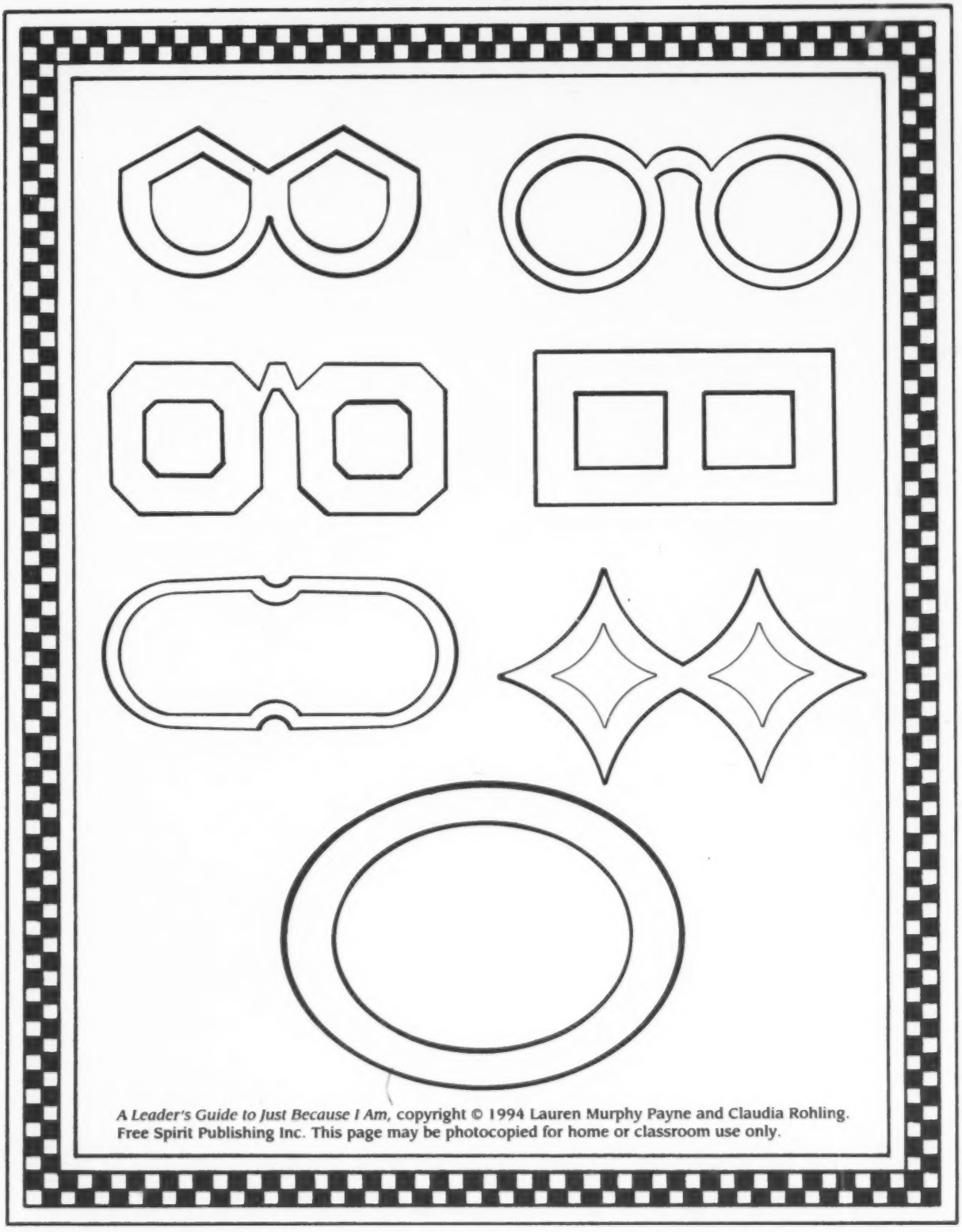
Hand out copies of the glasses patterns page and invite children to pick a pair of glasses to cut out. Have them color their glasses any way they want. Supply colored cellophane to tape to the back of the glasses to form the lenses. Punch holes on each side of the glasses frames and attach string or elastic so the children can wear their glasses.

Invite the children to put on their glasses and look around the room—at each other, at you, at familiar things. Ask, "Do things look different when we see them in a different way? Mistakes can look different, too. When we see a mistake as a chance to learn something, not as something bad we have done, a mistake looks much better."

FOLLOW-UP

Copy the Home Handout for this lesson, "When Your Child Makes Mistakes," to send home to parents. You might choose to include a note to parents about how valuable mistakes can be as learning experiences and how important it is for children to feel free to make mistakes.

LESSON NINE HANDOUT



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WHEN YOUR CHILD MAKES MISTAKES

Everyone makes mistakes. You know this, and your child needs to know it, too. Mistakes are an important part of living and growing.

Mistakes are also an important part of learning. You can help your child learn from mistakes by asking questions that help them think about their behavior and its consequences, and questions that help them to plan ahead.

Instead of asking:

- "How could you be so stupid?"
- "Don't you know anything?"
- "How could you have done that?"
- "What's the matter with you?"
- "What's wrong with you?"
- "Why can't you do that better?"
- "How could you be such a bad boy/girl?"
- "Aren't you ashamed of yourself?"
- "All the other kids can do it right. Why can't you?"
- "Why do you always mess up or get it wrong?"

Try asking:

- "What can you learn from that?"
- "How do you feel about that?"
- "Is that a good feeling?"
- "How can you do that differently next time?"
- "What else can you try?"
- "How can I help you?"

Be sure to say:

- "Don't worry, everyone makes mistakes."
- "I make mistakes too."
- "Let's try that again."
- "We can learn from our mistakes."

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LESSON TEN
I Can Make Decisions

Children need to have a sense of power over some of the things that affect them directly. They need to be able to make decisions. It is important to let them do this in ways that are appropriate to their age and development levels. When we let children make decisions, we are showing them that we trust them and their abilities. We are helping them to gain confidence in themselves. Children often know what feels "right" and "wrong," "good" and "bad." They need us to honor their experience and intuition.

GOALS

1. To help children become aware of the choices available to them in their daily lives.
2. To affirm their ability to make good choices.

ACTIVITIES

1. You've Got the Power

Talk with the children about the power they have to make decisions. Ask, "Are there some things you get to decide? What things?" If they have difficulty answering, you might ask questions like:

- "Do you get to decide what to wear?"
- "Do you get to decide what to eat? How much to eat?"

- "Do you get to decide where to keep your toys?"
- "Do you get to decide what book to read at bedtime?"
- "Do you get to decide when you want a hug?"

Ask, "Do you have to do some things you don't like to do? What things?" (The children will probably find it easier to answer this question.) After hearing their answers, ask, "How does it feel when you do something you don't like to do?"

Talk about how it is appropriate to help around the house and to be a responsible member of the family. Explain that part of growing up involves doing some things you don't like to do, just because they need doing and they are your job.

2. The "Yes" Collage

Materials needed:

- Paper
- Magazines with pictures
- Safety scissors
- Glue or tape

Have the children cut pictures from magazines of things they say "yes" to—things they like or things they like to do. Invite them to make collages from their pictures using paper and glue or tape. If you prefer, this can be a group activity, with everyone contributing to a mural collage.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Talk with the children about the things they say "yes" to. Talk about the consequences of deciding to say "yes." Ask, "What might happen if you say 'yes' to things that are dangerous or wrong?" Discuss the importance of choosing to say "yes" to things that are safe and healthy.
2. Copy the Home Handout for this lesson, "50 Ways to Say 'Yes' to Children," to send home to parents.

50 WAYS TO SAY "YES" TO CHILDREN

1. Plan menus together.
2. Go swimming.
3. Treat your children the way you want to be treated.
4. Go to the library—READ!
5. Hold their hands.
6. Kiss and hug them.
7. Plant something special together.
8. Pick apples.
9. Dance.
10. Plan a party.
11. Tell jokes together.
12. Laugh.
13. Have cocoa by candlelight.
14. Go to the beach and collect stones.
15. Make up silly rhymes.
16. Look for shapes in the clouds.
17. Work together.
18. Look at pictures together.
19. Lie on a blanket and look at the stars.
20. Blow bubbles together.
21. Paint a fence.
22. Play ball.
23. Row a boat.
24. Take a walk.
25. Build a tent.
26. Tell stories about yourself as a child: what you liked, what you didn't like, what you needed, what you did.
27. Go to an ice cream store. Let your child select his or her favorite flavor.
28. Make faces.
29. Listen together for sounds.
30. Make beds together.
31. Write a story or letter together.
32. Visit a museum. Let your child set the pace. Talk about what you see.
33. Color together.
34. Make a clubhouse together.
35. Play with clay.
36. Sing!
37. Play "Ring Around the Rosie."
38. Do the dishes together.
39. Build with blocks.
40. Plan an imaginary trip.
41. Ride a bus.
42. Help with homework.
43. Invite their friends over—surprise them.
44. Bury each other in sand or leaves.
45. Sleep out in a tent.
46. Make chocolate chip cookies together.
47. Make a phone call.
48. Dance around a tree.
49. Recycle.
50. Exercise.

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LESSON ELEVEN
Sometimes I Say "No"

Children know what things feel "right" and "wrong" to them. It is important to recognize and support their feelings and decisions. As adults, we must empower children to set their own limits regarding who can and cannot touch them and what they will and will not do.

IMPORTANT NOTE

It is possible that during this lesson a child may indicate that she or he is being abused in some way. We urge you to read "If You Suspect That a Child Is Being Abused..." on page 44 *before* you present the lesson. If you are teaching this course in a school, preschool, day care, or other group setting, be sure that you know the policies and procedures of your school or organization regarding abuse and the discovery or suspicion of abuse.

GOALS

1. To help children clarify the things that feel wrong to them.
2. To teach children appropriate and effective ways to say "no."
3. To let children experiment with saying "no."

Activities

1. The "No" Hand

Materials needed:

- Cardboard
- Safety scissors
- Paints
- Flat sticks
  (tongue depressors, popsicle sticks)
- Glue or tape

Have the children trace one of their hands on cardboard and cut it out. They can paint their hand red or any other color they choose, as long as it is a strong color. Allow time for the paint to dry, then help the children write "NO" on their hand. Attach the hands to flat sticks.

Invite the children to hold up their hands and practice saying a forceful "NO!" Ask them to think of more than one way to say "no." See if they can come up with ways that are positive and respectful, yet firm. For ideas, see the Home Handout, "25 Ways to Say 'No.'"

2. Reasons to Say "No"

Talk with the children about the kinds of things they say "no" to. Ask questions like:

- "What are some things you don't like to do?"
- "Are there things you have to do that feel wrong to you?"
- "Who can you tell when something feels wrong to you?"

Help the children identify trusted adults they can talk to about things that feel wrong to them.

Follow-up

1. Reinforce that children have the right to say "no." Teach them the "Stop Rule":

   *Whenever a child says "no" or "stop," whatever activity is presently occurring ceases immediately.**

   Or use this translation:

   When you say "no" or "stop," whatever is happening must stop right now!

   Explain that this rule applies to teasing, tickling, and playing, as well as to other activities or forms of touching. Tell the children to talk about this rule with their families. Everyone should agree to respect this rule.

   Tell the children, "It is your right to say 'no.' You get to set limits about yourself and your body." When children understand and believe this, it gives them a sense of power that will carry over to many other situations they encounter in their lives.

2. Copy the Home Handout for this lesson, "25 Ways to Say 'No,'" to send home to parents. You might choose to include a note to parents about how important it is for children to learn to say "no" and for adults to respect their limits.

* The "Stop Rule" is used with permission of KIDS CAN (Child Abuse Prevention Program), copyright © 1985 by Catholic Social Services, Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Inc.

25 WAYS TO SAY "NO"

1. Stop it.
2. I don't like that.
3. That hurts me/my feelings.
4. NO.
5. That doesn't feel good.
6. I hate that.
7. I mean it.
8. I don't feel like doing that right now.
9. I don't want to.
10. No, thank you.
11. That makes me mad.
12. I don't need that.
13. That makes me uncomfortable.
14. Please don't.
15. Not me!
16. It's not what I want to do.
17. I feel angry about that.
18. I'm going to do something else now.
19. I don't want to play like that.
20. I don't have to do that.
21. I don't think so.
22. No way!
23. I'm not going to do that.
24. That's not my style!
25. I won't.

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If You Suspect That a Child Is Being Abused...

The regulations governing the reporting of child abuse differ from state to state. If you suspect that a child is being abused, contact your local Social Service or Child Welfare Department. You can also obtain information about what to do and how to report child abuse from your local Police Department or District Attorney's office.

Many states have specific guidelines identifying certain professionals as "mandatory reporters." This means that those professionals are required by law to report any suspected child abuse. Some states have provisions in their laws to protect the identity of those reporting child abuse. Check with your local agencies to determine your rights and responsibilities.

If a child reports abuse to you at any point during this lesson, DO NOT attempt to further interview the child. Let the child speak about what is happening to him or her, and affirm to the child how difficult it must be to be in that situation. Offer suggestions within the context of the lesson on ways that the child might handle the situation. After the lesson, and with regard to the laws of your state or organization, act promptly in reporting the abuse.

Do not ask the child leading questions about what is happening to him or her. Leave that to professionals who have been specially trained to deal with this sensitive issue.

Do not frighten the child further by talking about reporting the abuse. In many cases, children who are being abused have been told by their abusers that very bad things will happen if they tell anyone. Report the situation immediately to the appropriate authorities and let them handle it.

For information on child abuse, contact:

The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, DC 20013
Telephone (703) 385-7565
Toll-Free Telephone 1-800-394-3366

The National Exchange Club Foundation for the Prevention of Child Abuse
3050 Central Avenue
Toledo, OH 43606
Telephone (419) 535-3232
FAX (419) 535-1989

LESSON TWELVE
I Have Needs

It is important to teach children that having needs is part of being human. This is not a failure or a shortcoming, it is a fact. No one can live without help from others. Children must know that their needs are acceptable and will be met appropriately.

GOALS

1. To introduce children to the concept of needs.
2. To help children become aware of their needs.
3. To teach children to ask for what they need in appropriate ways.

ACTIVITIES

1. Everybody Needs Something

Discuss with the children the idea that everybody needs things. Start by talking with them about things we need to accomplish tasks.

Examples

- a pencil sharpener to sharpen our pencils
- an oven to bake a cake
- a watch or clock to tell the time

Encourage the children to think and talk about other things we need to do various jobs.

Next, discuss with the children the things we need for ourselves.

Examples

- food
- water
- sleep
- clothing
- love
- medicine

2. Getting Help

Talk with the children about ways they can get their needs met. Help them to identify adults they can ask for help when they need something. Talk with them about ways to ask for what they need. Explain the difference between effective/appropriate ways to ask and ineffective/inappropriate ways.

Examples

Effective/appropriate ways:

- asking politely
- saying "please" and "thank you"
- waiting their turn
- not interrupting

Ineffective/inappropriate ways:

- whining
- temper tantrums
- crying
- yelling
- screaming
- pushing ahead of other people
- interrupting

Follow-up

Copy the Home Handout for this lesson, "25 Things Children Need," to send home to parents.

25 Things Children Need

1. Unconditional love.
2. Healthful, balanced meals.
3. Regular, adequate sleep.
4. Frequent (daily) physical exercise.
5. The freedom to be creative.
6. Time to interact with their peers and friends.
7. Hugs, kisses, shoulder rubs, snuggles, and other nonverbal expressions of love from people who have their permission.
8. Consistent, appropriate discipline.
9. To be listened to and heard.
10. To laugh.
11. To feel important.
12. Responsibilities appropriate to their age and development levels.
13. Balance in their lives.
14. To be talked to, not talked down to.
15. To feel valued.
16. To make mistakes; to be taught how to learn from their mistakes.
17. To be treated with courtesy and respect.
18. To be safe.
19. To have their feelings validated and affirmed.
20. Consistent, predictable limits.
21. Honesty and truth.
22. To be taught what they don't know.
23. Flexibility.
24. Physical and mental relaxation.
25. Intellectual stimulation and challenges.

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LESSON THIRTEEN
I Am Myself, Special and Unique

Every child is a celebration and a miracle. It is our job as adults to make sure they know that. Children must be accepted exactly as they are, unconditionally, in order for them to grow and thrive. It is important that we accept and affirm all the parts of who they are. That way, we can teach them what they need to know to be successful, satisfied children.

GOALS

1. To review and reinforce the concepts presented throughout *Just Because I Am:*
   - that all children are important and valuable
   - that their worth is not related to external factors
   - that they have needs and rights as children
2. To help children identify ways in which they are like all children and ways in which they are uniquely themselves.

ACTIVITIES

1. Stars

Materials needed:

- Paper or poster board
- A picture of each child (brought from home, cut from a class picture, or taken by you, perhaps on the spot with a Polaroid camera)
- Safety scissors

- Glue or tape
- Ribbons or string

Ask the children to draw stars on paper or poster board. Their stars should be large enough that their pictures can be taped or glued in the center. Have them cut out their stars. Attach a ribbon or piece of string to each star and hang it from the ceiling.

Once the stars are all in place, say, "We are like the stars at night. Alone, we are beautiful and wondrous. Together, we are magnificent—a whole starry sky."

Tell the children, "We are all stars, just as we are." You may want to go around the group and say, "_____, you are a star. _____, so are you._____, you are a star, too...."

2. Flowers

Materials needed:

- Paper for drawing
- Colored pencils, markers, crayons, etc.

Tell the children, "We are all made up of our bodies, our feelings, and our thoughts. All of these parts are important, and we need all of them to grow and to be ourselves. They are like the parts of a flower. Our bodies are the stems, our feelings are the leaves that grow from the stems, and our thoughts are the flower petals, beautiful and bright. A flower isn't complete if it doesn't have all of its parts. We need all of our parts, too."

Have the children draw flowers representing themselves. Afterward, admire the flowers. Ask the children to tell you why they are like their flowers.

3. Alike and Different

Tell the children that their drawings are alike—they are all flowers—but they are different, too. Begin a discussion of similarities and differences by asking questions like:

- "How are you like other children you know?"
- "How are you different?"
- "What are some things that you really like about yourself?"
- "What makes you feel special?"
- "What makes you glad to be you?"

End the course by telling each child something you think is special about him or her. Go around the group until you have addressed each child directly.

Examples

- "Jeremy, you are special because you like to help other people."
- "Sallie, you are special because you enjoy playing checkers."
- "Maya, you are special because you love to laugh."
- "Carlos, you are special because you have fun with LEGOs."
- "Annie, you are special because you like to jump high."

Highlight qualities and characteristics to value in each child. Remember to focus on who they are, not what they do or what they are "good at." They are special just because they are.

FOLLOW-UP

Copy the Home Handout for this lesson, "I Am Special," to send home to parents. You may choose to include a note to parents letting them know that their child has completed the *Just Because I Am* course. Suggest that they praise and congratulate their child for completing the course. Encourage them to display the handout prominently for the family to see.

I AM SPECIAL

My name is _____

I am a person.

I am special.

I am important.

Not because of things I do,

Not because of what I look like,

Not because of what I have...

Just because I am.

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Recommended Reading

Books for Children

Frasier, Debra. *On the Day You Were Born* (Harbrace, 1991). A children's picture book addressing the miracle of an individual life.

Garth, Maureen. *Starbright: Meditations for Children* (Harper San Francisco, 1991). A collection of stories presented as visualizations for children.

Joosse, Barbara M. *Mama, Do You Love Me?* (Chronicle Books, 1991). A children's picture book affirming a parent's unconditional love.

Kaiser Johnson, Lee and Sue. *If I Ran the Family* (Free Spirit Publishing, 1992.) A children's picture book about a young girl's fantasy of taking charge of her family with positive, powerful results.

Kaufman, Gershen, and Raphael, Lev. *Stick Up For Yourself! Every Kid's Guide to Personal Power and Positive Self-Esteem* (Free Spirit Publishing, 1990). A guide to empower children ages 8–12 with practical dialogue and activities.

Munsch, Robert. *Love You Forever* (Firefly Books, 1986). A children's picture book attesting to a parent's enduring love.

Murphy, Jill. *Five Minutes' Peace: Miniature Edition* (Putnam, 1989). A children's picture book validating the challenges of being a parent.

Olofsdotter, Marie. *Sofia and the Heartmender* (Free Spirit Publishing, 1993). A children's picture book about a young girl's search for self-esteem.

Palmer, Pat. *Liking Myself* (Impact Publishers, 1977). A young child's guide to self-esteem.

Pappas, Michael G. *Sweet Dreams for Little Ones: Bedtime Fantasies to Build Self-Esteem* (Harper San Francisco, 1985). A collection of children's stories to promote self-esteem.

Ross, Dave. *A Book of Hugs* (Harper Collins, 1991). A dictionary of hugs.

Schwartz, Linda. *What Would You Do? A Kid's Guide to Tricky and Sticky Situations* (Learning Works, 1991). A valuable guide for teaching children about safety in everyday situations.

Viorst, Judith. *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* (Macmillan, 1972). A children's picture book normalizing the difficulties of being a child.

Books for Adults

Berends, Polly Barrien. *Whole Child, Whole Parent* (Harper Collins, 1987). A parent guide containing the philosophy, psychology, spirituality, and creativity of child rearing.

Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Good Enough Parent: A Book on Child-Rearing* (Random House, 1988). A parent's guide to raising children in a way that honors each child's individuality.

Capacchione, Lucia. *The Creative Journal for Children: A Guide for Parents, Teachers, and Counselors* (Shambala Publications, 1989). Suggestions for writing and drawing exercises to encourage a child's self-esteem and creativity.

Clarke, Jean Illsley. *Self-Esteem: A Family Affair* (Harper San Francisco, 1985). A guide for developing self-esteem in children of all stages and ages.

Edelman, Marian Wright. *The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours* (Harper Collins, 1993). Lessons for living to remind us that children are our future.

Faber, Adele, and Mazlish, Elaine. *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk* (Avon, 1982). A valuable guide to effective communication skills for parents.

—— *Siblings Without Rivalry* (Avon, 1988). A priceless sourcebook for parents with more than one child.

Hart, Louise. *Winning Family: Increasing Self Esteem in Your Children and Yourself* (Celestial Arts, 1993). Advice for parents on how to parent themselves as well as their children.

Kelly, Marguerite, and Parsons, Elia. *The Mother's Almanac.* (Doubleday, 1992). A child care book written from a mother's perspective, with activities and parenting wisdom.

Sullivan, S. Adams. *The Father's Almanac* (Doubleday, 1992). A sourcebook of activities and child-rearing tips from a father's point of view.

About the Authors

Lauren Murphy Payne, M.S.W., is a psychotherapist in private practice at Reese Therapy and Associates in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She has made appearances on metropolitan Milwaukee television talk shows and is a frequent speaker at local, regional, state, and national conferences. She is cofounder of The Turning Point, a speaking and consulting service offering training, workshops, and seminars. Ms. Murphy Payne serves as an adviser to the Board of Directors of Innovative Youth Services, a youth-centered agency and shelter in Racine, Wisconsin. She is presently serving on the board of The Growing Place day care center, also in Racine. She lives in Racine and has two school-age children.

Claudia Rohling is an artist/illustrator whose work has been sold throughout the United States and Canadian international gift markets. Her work has also been featured on the covers of *Leisure Arts the Magazine* and *Celebrations*. She is the owner of Rohling Studios, where she oversees production, distribution, and creative development of her work as prints and greeting cards. She is cofounder of The Turning Point speaking and consulting service and serves as its creative director. She lives in Racine, Wisconsin, is married, and is the mother of three young adults.

Lauren and Claudia also present workshops on the topics of parenting and self-esteem for children. You may contact them through Free Spirit Publishing Inc., 400 First Avenue North, Suite 616, Minneapolis, MN 55401; (612) 338-2068.

A Leader's Guide to

Just Because I Am

A companion to the children's picture book, *JUST BECAUSE I AM*, this Leader's Guide is a complete introductory course on self-esteem for young children.

- **Lessons** reinforce the ideas presented in the picture book with enjoyable activities and simple discussion questions.
- **Follow-up questions** and suggestions support and deepen the lesson themes.
- **Special Home Handouts** encourage parents to continue affirming their children's feelings, needs, and growing self-awareness.
- **Letters to parents** help teachers, school couselors, day-care providers, and other adult caregivers communicate with parents about the course.
- **Two reading lists**—one for children, one for adults—point the way to additional resources on self-esteem and positive parenting.

Children's feelings about themselves affect the choices they make and shape their plans, hopes, and dreams for the future. *JUST BECAUSE I AM* and this Leader's Guide help the children in your care to recognize and acknowledge their value and worth as unique individuals.

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